February inflation hits 2-year low of 3.4 percent

STORY IN BUSINESS, PAGE B1

GMA: 'It's no joke being the President'

By Carlito Pablo and TJ Burgonio

IN an unannounced move, President Macapagal-Arroyo spoke on national television late Monday night to ask the public for understanding and support for her administration.

"Ang pakiusap ko po lamang ay magtulungan tayo. Kailangan ko kayo (My only appeal is for us to help each

GMA/A15

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER
BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS

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Tears, pleas don't sway us, says SC

Estrada refuses to turn over trial papers to new lawyers

By Volt Contreras

GOING for broke, deposed President Joseph Estrada yesterday refused to turn over documents and other material related to his defense to "any and all" lawyers appointed by the Sandiganbayan.

In a letter dated March 4, Estrada instructed his nine dismissed lawyers not to yield "records, evidences and other similar documents and matters" to their successors.

He also asked them not to cooperate with any court-appointed counsel without his consent.

"You are aware that I am not engaging the services of new counsel, and am rejecting any and all lawyers appointed by the court to act (in) my defense," Estrada reminded his erstwhile lawyers, who include former Sen. Rene Saguisag, former Justice Secretary Serafin Cuevas and former University of

ESTRADA/A15

Many solons back exile but 'scared' to sign resolution

By Juliet L. Javellana and Christine Avendaño

MANY members of the House of Representatives support a resolution asking President Macapagal-Arroyo to send Joseph Estrada into exile but "are scared to sign it," principal author Lanao del Sur Rep. Benasing Macarambon said.

Macarambon said the resolution gained eight co-authors and 20 supporters as of yesterday but he refused to show their names.

He said the supporters feared being criticized in media if they signed his resolution. "*Hindi ka pwedeng bakla dito,* you're either black or white," he said.

Macarambon was waiting for two more members of the House to co-author the resolution before filing it last night.

MANY/A15

By Michael Lim Ubac, Cynthia D. Balana and Volt Contreras

THE SUPREME COURT is not moved by tears or pleas, contrary to the "pure misinformation" dispensed by Joseph Estrada and his supporters, Deputy Court Administrator Ismael Khan said yesterday.

Speaking with reporters, Khan denounced the deposed President for saying that Chief Justice Hilario Davide had "criminally connived" against him and had "actively" and "tearfully" influenced the other justices to rule against his petitions.

"This is pure misinformation," said Khan, who serves as the tribunal's spokesperson. "The justices are independent-minded. If there's a matter up for discussion, *hinihimay-himay talaga at hindi sila nakukuha sa paiyak-iyak at pakiusap* (they discuss this minutely and they are not swayed by tears or pleas) . . . *Talagang ginagawa nila ang magdesisyon sila* (They arrive at their decisions) according to the facts of the law."

Khan branded as "unfair" Estrada's statements assailing the high court, and said the judiciary had been bending over backward to make sure that his rights under the Constitution were being observed.

Estrada is "protected," Khan said. "In fact, the former President is more protected (than any other accused)."

But if Estrada were acting out a supposed script calling for him to go on a fast, he will be hard put to emulate India's Mahatma Gandhi and the Philippines' own Benigno "Ninoy" Aquino Jr., Sen. Joker Arroyo said.

TEARS/A15

SOLDIERS offer flowers and prayers on a mass grave of alleged victims of New People's Army atrocities in Candelaria, Quezon.
ERIK ARAZAS

Bloody communist purges continuing, says military

By Martin P. Marfil and Delfin T. Mallari

CANDELARIA, Quezon—A specter is haunting the local communist movement. Or, more precisely, the military is resurrecting the specter of scores of communist rebels who have been killed by their own comrades.

Top military officials yesterday brought a dozen journalists to the graveyard of 58 alleged victims of bloody purges carried out by the Communist Party of the Philippines and its New People's Army.

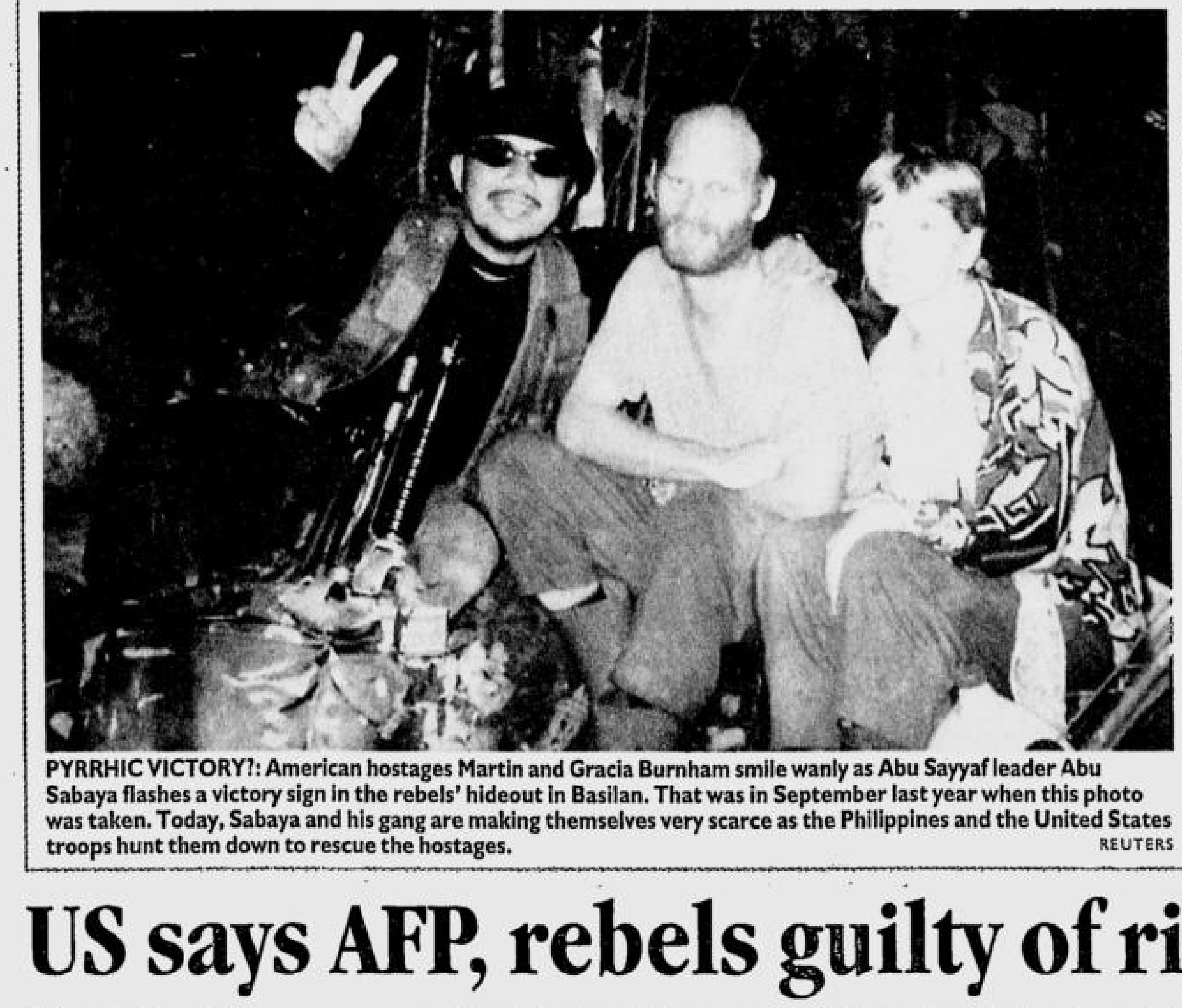
"Bantayog ng mga Biktima ng NPA (Monument to the Victims of NPA Violence)," read the billboard that the military had just put up in front of the detachment of the 415th Provincial Mobile Group of the Philippine National Police in Barangay Taguan, Candelaria.

A priest blessed the remains of six alleged victims of the purge before they were buried on Tuesday at the graveyard.

"This is a temporary resting place for them as they remain unidentified. Later on, we'll try to trace their relatives," said Maj. Gen. Ernesto Carolina, chief of the Southern Luzon Command.

"We just want the people to know what is happening in the (communist) organization," Army spokesperson Lt. Col. Jose Mabanta added, pointing to the unmarked concrete crosses that dotted the gravesite

BLOODY/A4



PYRRHIC VICTORY?: American hostages Martin and Gracia Burnham smile wanly as Abu Sayyaf leader Abu Sabaya flashes a victory sign in the rebels' hideout in Basilan. That was in September last year when this photo was taken. Today, Sabaya and his gang are making themselves very scarce as the Philippines and the United States troops hunt them down to rescue the hostages.
REUTERS

'Basyang,' packing 165-kph winds, threatens N. Luzon

By Gerald G. Lacuarta

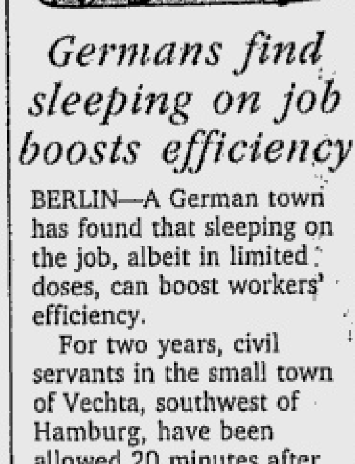
TYPHOON "Basyang" continued to whip Samar province yesterday as it headed toward Northern Luzon with maximum winds of 165 kph.

The Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration said Basyang (international code name: Mitag) had not changed direction and still threatens Northern Luzon.

Basyang is forecast to be 600 km east southeast of Casiguran, Aurora, or 870 km southeast of Basco, Batanes, this afternoon.

At 4 p.m. yesterday, the eye of the typhoon was located 870 km southeast of Casiguran with maximum winds of 165 kph near the center and gustiness of up to

BASYANG/A4


AHHH...I LOVE WORKING IN THIS OFFICE
Z

Germans find sleeping on job boosts efficiency

BERLIN—A German town has found that sleeping on the job, albeit in limited doses, can boost workers' efficiency.

For two years, civil servants in the small town of Vechta, southwest of Hamburg, have been allowed 20 minutes after lunch to go home and take a nap, doze in their office chairs or otherwise relax.

GERMANS/A4

US says AFP, rebels guilty of rights violations

By Christine Herrera

THE US Department of State has reported that the Philippine government generally respects human rights but "members of the security services" are responsible for extra-judicial killings, disappearances, torture, and arbitrary arrest and detention.

The state department's "Country Reports on Human Rights Practices—2001" said "these problems worsened" when the Philippine government intensified its campaign against the Abu Sayyaf.

But the reports, released by the Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights and Labor on March 4, said human rights violations were not limited to government forces. It said the New People's Army and the Moro Islamic Liberation Front also committed serious human rights violation, including killings, kidnappings, torture and detention.

"The NPA and MILF were responsible for a significant number of arbitrary arrests and detentions, often in connection with informal courts set up to try military, police, local politicians and other persons for 'crimes against the people,'" the report on the Philippines said.

The state department found merit to claims by the Philippine Commission on Human Rights (CHR) that the Philippine National Police was the "worst abuser of human rights" despite a significant decrease in the complaints against the PNP last year compared with 2000.

The state department based its findings on analyses of reports made by the CHR, nongov-

US/A4

'WAG SA DAANAN!

Stay clear of war games, MILF told

By Carlito Pablo and TJ Burgonio

THE MORO Islamic Liberation Front, which is involved in peace negotiations with the government, has been told not to stand in the way of government and United States troops conducting the joint Balikatan 02-1 exercises in Basilan.

Jesus Dureza, the presidential assistant for Mindanao, issued this warning in the wake of a reported MILF demand that the government coordinate the joint forces' movements with that of the rebels, who claim to have a sizeable force in Basilan, to avoid accidental clashes.

In an interview with the RMN network yesterday, Dureza told the MILF: "Just don't get in the way while these things are ongoing because you are not targets."

Dureza, who heads the government negotiators in the peace talks, said the panel had relayed the message to the MILF during a joint ceasefire committee meeting in Cotabato City on Feb. 11.

He warned that any group that would support the Abu Sayyaf, the target of the exercises, would "not be recognized by the military" which would undertake whatever is necessary to check them.

MILF spokesperson Eid Kabalu said the other day the government must coordinate with the MILF in areas where the rebels operate.

The government has yet to formally respond to the demand.

Brig. Gen. Edilberto Adan, the Armed Forces spokesperson, said the MILF "had no business" issuing such a demand.

"They are in no position to say that. We are not recognizing any MILF camp in any part of Mindanao," he told a press conference yesterday.

Adan issued the stern warning: "Any armed group that is not authorized to exist in an area is considered a threat, and we will check them, we will apprehend them, and if they fight, they will be dealt with force."

Dureza said the MILF has been properly informed by the government peace negotiators about the conduct of the Balikatan 02-1.

"They know that they are not the targets of the military training," he said.

Officials have said that giving in to such demands would mean recognizing the MILF's claim to certain territories.

MILF rebels have figured in a number of clashes with government forces in Central Mindanao despite a ceasefire agreement in what military officials believe to be an offensive to retake the camps the rebels lost in 2000.

Dureza said the ceasefire committees of the two sides would submit their reports on these incidents.

Dureza said that once the reports were in, the matter would be placed on the agenda of the ongoing peace negotiations.

"So rather than fighting over it in the battleground there, we'll continue the fight but on the negotiation table," Dureza said.

Adan said the MILF had launched the offensive "to gain a leverage so that when they talk with our government panel, they can say they're in control of certain areas."

Peace talks between the MILF and the government are to resume on March 9.

Adan cited 26 violent incidents during a 12-day period, between Feb. 21 and March 4.

Citing military reports, he said the MILF had engaged the military in 14 encounters, staged two ambushes, two sniping incidents and committed eight cases of harassment.

Three soldiers were killed while 16 others were wounded during these armed encounters.

The military was able to recover 70 high-powered firearms, ammunition and communication equipment from the rebels, Adan said.

Defense chief sets up 24-hour action centers

THE ARMED Forces will set up Provincial Area Coordinating Centers (PACC) all over the country to allow the military and local government units to respond quickly to peace and order problems and natural calamities.

Defense Secretary Angelo Reyes, in a press statement, said the PACC "will serve as the operations center of all peace and order activities and the nerve center of government disaster operations in the province."

Reyes led the recent activation of the Disaster Response Company of the Army's 51st Engineer Brigade, which will be in the forefront of the government's calamity response operations.

The Department of National Defense has allotted P10 million in initial funding for the refurbishment and reconditioning of dilapidated military engineering equipment for the use of the DRC. Among them were manlifts, cranes, bulldozers and communications van.

Reyes flew to Bohol early this week to set up the first Provincial Area Coordination Center to be based at Camp Francisco Dagohoy in Tagbilaran City.

Joining Reyes, who is also chair of the National Disaster Coordinating Council and the National Peace and Order Council (NPOC), in the launching ceremonies are Bohol Gov. Erico Aumentado and other provincial officials.

6 missing Boracay divers rescued

By Ma. Doisa Labiste
and Nestor Burgos Jr.
PDI Visayas Bureau

ILOILO CITY—Six European divers who went missing in waters off Boracay island for a day—and feared to have been kidnapped—after being swept away by strong currents have been found alive by fishermen off two islands of Antique province, the Coast Guard said yesterday.

The six, all experienced and well-equipped divers, were safe and were flown by helicopter to the Boracay resort island where they came before venturing into the sea last Monday, Coast Guard chief Vice Adm. Ruben Lista said.

"We didn't think they were kidnapped, but we went to look for them right away," Lista said in a phone interview.

The divers were identified as Swedish Tirno Kauristo, Spaniard Carlos Blanch, Austrian Hannes Turner, and Germans Herbert Hausser, Marcelo Kaiser and Renzi Zanardo.

DIVE master Carlos Blanch points to the map as he narrates their ordeal at sea. With him is his friend, Hans Turner. NESTOR BURGOS JR.

Kauristo, Hausser, Kaiser and Zanardo were found by the crew of the motor banca Victor III at 10 a.m. yesterday after 24 hours of drifting on the sea off Sibay island.

Blanch and Thurner were earlier rescued by the crew of the Cebu-based fishing boat Maya on Monday night off Nogas island.

The group left Boracay on Monday morning on a diving expedition to Panagatan Reef, located about 10 nautical miles from Semirara island in Caluya town, Antique.

The expedition had been organized by the Fish Eye Dive Shop in Boracay.

When the divers did not surface after more than two hours under water, their boatmen were alarmed and went back to Boracay for help.

Fishermen to the rescue

They were rescued by fishermen who had joined a search at sea and nearby islands by Coast Guard patrol boats and two Philippine Air force Sikorsky helicopters, Coast Guard Lt. Commander Pedro Tinampay said.

He said the six, all experienced divers, swam their way out of danger. The waters in the area had been increasingly choppy, he said.

"They're safe, they're well, alive and kicking," Tinampay said.

Upon learning of the divers' rescue, many Boracay islanders tied yellow ribbons to coconut trees and huts and prepared a big welcome party.

"We were worrying the whole night," said Nenet Graf, a resident and close friend of Blanch.

"Now everybody's happy. They're buying beer and cooking their favorite appetizers," she said.

Blanch, who operates Fisheye, said the five-member group—Kauristo, Hausser, Kaiser, Zanardo and himself—left Boracay on Feb. 28 on a motorized banca, Marcelina, for Irin island and Apo Reef where they stayed for two days.

The group proceeded to Pandan island in Occidental Mindoro where Thurner, a friend of Blanch's, joined them.

Strong waves

The group left Pandan around 2 p.m. on March 4 but sought shelter in Semirara island, the biggest of nine islands of Caluya, at around 10 p.m. because of strong waves.

They left Semirara at 6:30 a.m. on Monday, reaching Panagatan island at 8 a.m.

Blanch, who has been living in Boracay for the past seven years, said they had been diving for about 45 minutes when strong underwater currents carried them away from where their boat was anchored.

They tried to signal the three-member crew of the Marcelina when they surfaced about a mile away but they could not be seen because of the big waves.

The group swam northwards in the direction of Panagatan but the strong current carried them away from the island.

After about three hours, the group decided to split into two.

Staying together

Blanch and Thurner stayed behind after Thurner suffered cramps in his legs while the four others tried to swim toward the island. The two tied each other with a four-meter cord.

"We decided to stay together whatever happens and keep on swimming," Blanch told the INQUIRER.

He said their buoyant wet suits kept them warm but during the night they continued swimming to ward off the cold, resting for a few minutes every hour. ***With reports from Abigail L. Ho, Philip C. Tubeza and AP***

7 top SSS execs slapped 6-month suspension

By Michael Lim Ubac

OMBUDSMAN Aniano Desierto yesterday slapped a six-month preventive suspension on seven ranking officials of the Social Security System in connection with the failed investment of the SSS in DMCI Holdings Inc. amounting to P575.4-million in 1999.

Suspended for six months without pay were Chief Actuary and Executive Vice President Horacio Templo, Senior Vice President for Investment Edgar Solilapsi, Senior Vice President for Legal and Collection Amador Monteiro, Deputy Chief Actuary and Vice President for Securities Trading Rizaldy Capulong, Assistant Vice President for Asset Management Mariano Pablo Tolentino, and Commissioners Marianita Mendoza and Juan Tan.

Desierto said the suspension stemmed from the complaint filed by Amado Cabaero and Honesto General of the Philippine Association of Retired Persons for alleged grave misconduct and conduct prejudicial to the best interest of the service.

Desierto said the preventive suspension was necessary since "evidence at hand presents the concurrence of all the conditions that would warrant the preventive suspension of respondents pending the conduct of the administrative proceedings of the case."

Executory

Desierto said the suspension order, which was dated Feb. 4, "is deemed immediately effective and executory."

He also ordered the seven, along with eight other respondents, to file their counter-affidavits with the Ombudsman Administrative Adjudication Board (AAB), which is handling the administrative aspect of the case, and with the Ombudsman Evaluation and Preliminary Investigation Bureau (EPIB), which is handling the criminal aspect of the case.

The eight other respondents were retired Executive Vice President Leopoldo Veroy, former SSS chair, president and CEO Carlos Arellano, Commissioner Raul Inocentes, former Commissioners Rafael Estrada, Miguel Varela, Cecilio Seño, Bievenido Laguesma and Aurora Arnaez.

"The complaint arose from the supposed anomalous investments made by the SSS with the DMCI Holdings Inc., consisting of block purchases of shares of stock from the said company, followed by stock-to-property swap, which caused the government financial institution to lose money," Desierto said.

Another graft case

Initial findings by the AAB showed that the SSS incurred "paper losses" amounting to P496 million out of the P575.4-million investment in DMCI, and an actual loss of P350.5-million from the "stock and money-to-property transaction."

This was because the 220,486 DMCI shares were acquired at an average cost of P2.61 per share by the SSS in 2000. This translated to a total acquisition cost of P575.4 million.

"SSS held on to its DMCI shares notwithstanding the downward spiral of its market price, such that as of 23 May 2000, it was only priced at 36 centavos per share. This represented an 86.23 percent drop of its share price from its acquisition cost… resulting in a loss of P496 million," AAB said.

Ten of the 15 respondents were earlier slapped with a six-month preventive suspension by the Ombudsman in connection with the allegedly overpriced purchase of P1.1 billion of PCIBank shares that SSS brought in 1999.

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GOOD AS BYPASSED

Alvarez misses the boat

ALVAREZ

THE COMMISSION on Appointments yesterday deferred action on the appointment of Transportation Secretary Pantaleon Alvarez, virtually bypassing him "due to lack of material time" to hear the testimonies of those opposing his appointment.

"The committee has effectively declared to bypass Secretary Pantaleon Alvarez," said Sen. Blas Ople, member of the CA committee on transportation and communications, which is conducting the confirmation hearings on Alvarez's nomination.

Ople explained that since the commission is set to adjourn on March 15, the committee would not have sufficient time to hear all those opposed to the confirmation of Alvarez.

The panel has so far heard the opposition-complaint of the MIA-Naia Airport Service Operators (Maso) with 11 more oppositors waiting for their turn.

The commission's committee on transportation and communications chair, Rep. Rafael Nantes, has agreed to subpoena Gloria Tan Climaco, chair of the presidential review committee on the Philippine International Air Terminal Corp. (Piatco) contract, and Ed Manda, general manager of the Ninoy Aquino International Airport.

Climaco and Manda are expected to shed light on the controversial provision in the contract which allegedly restricts the development of Subic and Clark's President Diosdado Macapagal International Airport in Pampanga as international airports as included in the so-called "amended re-stated concession agreement (ARCA)."

The committee has also decided to summon officials of the National Economic and Development Authority for their opinion on the deal.

"This means that the confirmation hearings for Secretary Alvarez might be prolonged," Ople said.

CA majority leader Rep. Gerry Espina said the failure of the committee to endorse Alvarez's confirmation before the CA adjourns Wednesday next week would mean that the transportation secretary had "effectively been bypassed."

"We don't have enough time to hear all the opposition complaints against him before we adjourn next week," Espina noted.

Because of this, President Macapagal-Arroyo might be constrained to reappoint Alvarez and submit his nomination before the CA resumes session on April 8 after the Lenten break.

'Batibot' drives Gloria off the air

By Dona Pazzibugan

PONG Pagong, the lovable turtle of "Batibot," rates higher than the President.

President Macapagal-Arroyo made this admission yesterday, saying the local children's show has forced her to cancel her weekly show, "May Gloria Ang Bukas Mo."

She said she could not possibly compete against "Batibot" for viewers' attention, especially on a Saturday morning.

"Of course, the children would watch Batibot on a Saturday morning. Even their mothers would watch "Batibot." Saturday morning is children's day," she told dzMM Monday night.

The President ended her program on its 19th episode last Saturday.

She said the show was not as effective as she had hoped. Besides, she said, it was also expensive and inconvenient for her and the crew.

Actually, "Batibot" was not her only rival in the fight for viewership. Other TV networks showed cartoons in the same time slot.

Ms Macapagal, however, is not giving up television just yet. She plans to stay on the medium but with a different format.

Ambassador? Cabrera likes sound of it

By Dona Pazzibugan

PRESS Secretary Noel Cabrera is not only leaving Malacañang, he is leaving the country as well.

Asked to choose from three new positions that the President had offered him, Cabrera yesterday said he would be happy to accept the post of envoy to Romania if appointed.

"I'm happy with that. I'm very flattered because that's a big responsibility and it's a different field where I think I can be of use," he said.

Although the President had mentioned the post to him, no decision has been made yet, he said.

"The President and I (will come to a decision) in the next few days," he said.

Romanian President Ion Iliescu was here on a state visit only last month.

The country already has an ambassador to the East European nation, Ma. Rosario Janolo.

Cabrera last week announced that he wanted to resign, pleading job "burnout."

Palace insiders, however, said the low-profile press secretary may have had enough of being kept out of the President's inner circle.

Ms Macapagal told dzMM late Monday that she had offered Cabrera three posts that he could choose from: ambassador to Romania, government representative to San Miguel Corp.'s Hong Kong office, or a board seat in one of the subsidiaries of state-controlled United Coconut Planters Bank.

Cabrera had turned down the last option because it was not his turf, the President said.

Cabrera said he would remain at his post until his appointment as ambassador becomes final.

He said the earliest that he could get his appointment and confirmation from the congressional Commission on Appointments was June.

Rigoberto Tiglao, the President's spokesperson, yesterday said Ms Macapagal had not yet signed any new appointment papers for Cabrera.

"He is still press secretary for the next few months," said Tiglao is believed to be one of those being considered to succeed Cabrera.

The other reported contenders are the President's personal publicist, Dante Ang and International Broadcasting Corp. president Cerge Remonde.

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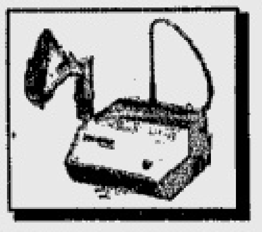

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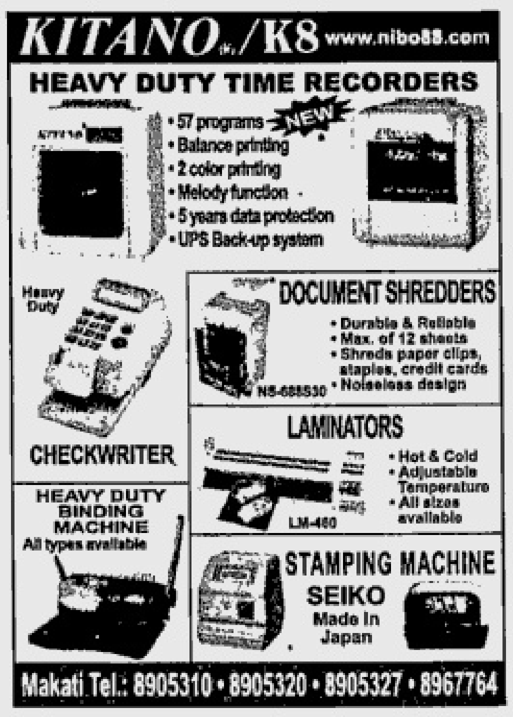

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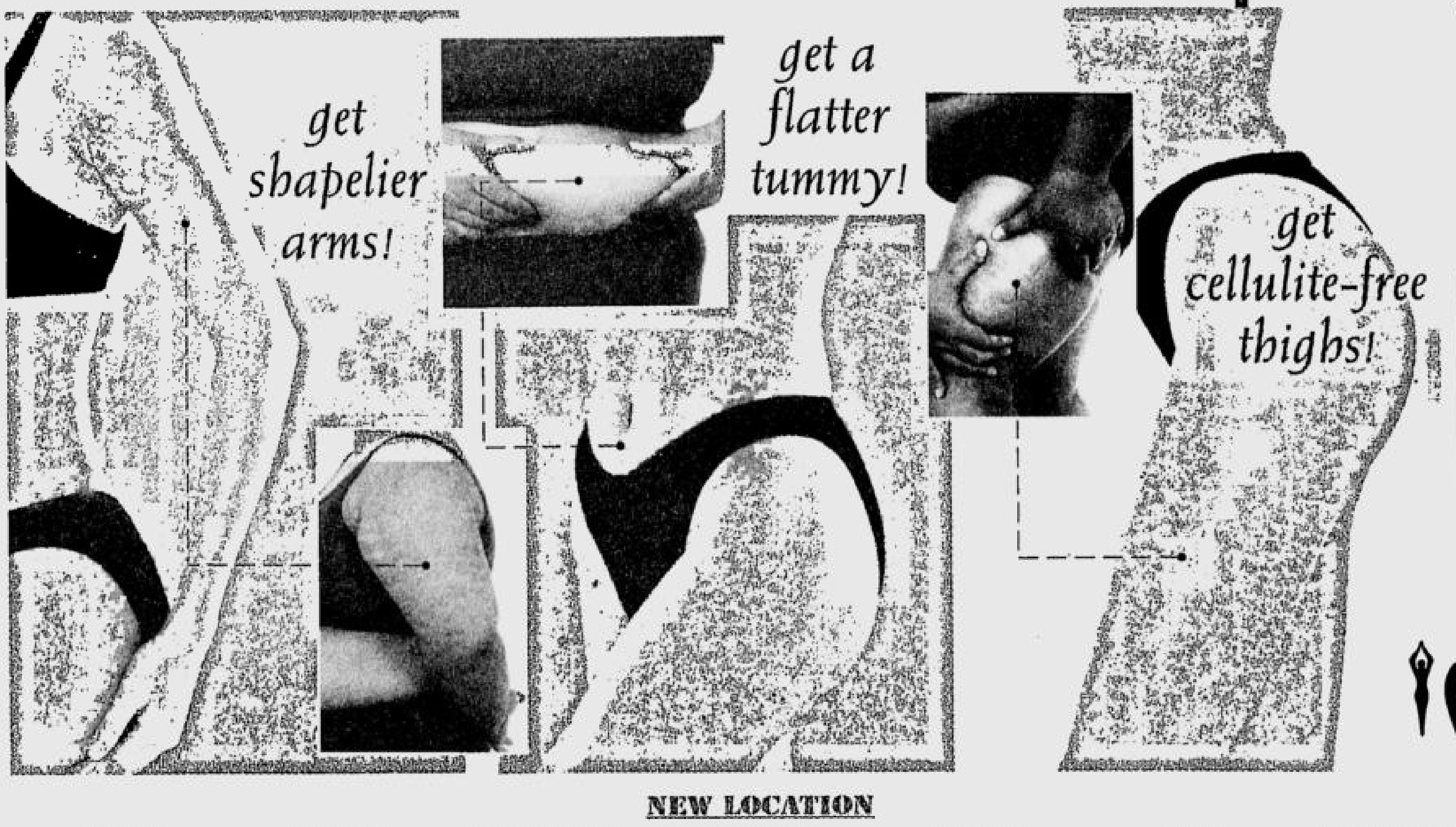
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Bloody communist purges continuing, says military

From page A1

along the national highway.

CPP spokesperson Gregorio Rosal, alias Ka Roger, said in a radio interview that the military was raising an "old issue that had long been addressed by the revolutionary movement."

Fidel Agcaoili, one of the communist peace negotiators, said in a TV interview that the government would always bring up the issue whenever the talks were on the verge of collapse.

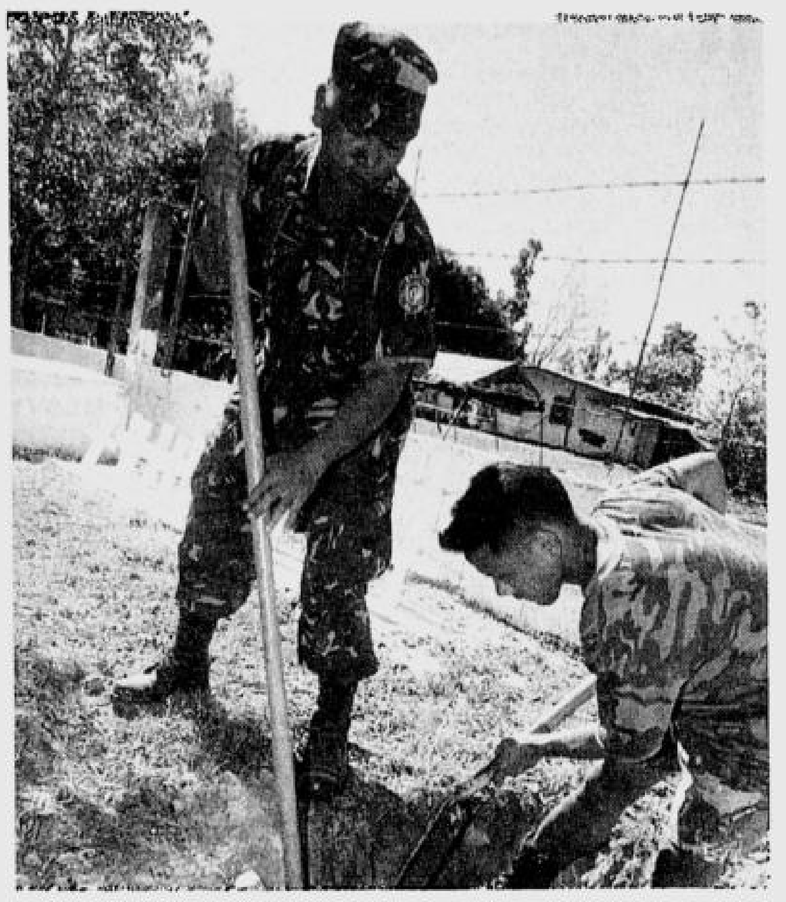
President Macapagal-Arroyo suspended talks with the communist-led National Democratic Front last year after the NPA assassinated two congressmen.

Agcaoili said the Macapagal administration was now trying to make it appear that the CPP, NPA and NDF were "terrorist" organizations to justify an all-out war against the revolutionary movement.

Both Rosal and Agcaoili acknowledged that bloody purges had indeed taken place in Southern Tagalog, Mindanao and other areas in the 1980s.

"But these are things of the past. Everyone is now conscious about human rights," Agcaoili said.

Mabanta, however, said at least 32 NPA rebels had been executed by their comrades last month, citing information provided by guerrillas who surrendered to government.



FORMER communist rebels watch under the shade as government soldiers dig for bodies in a mass grave of alleged victims of the New People's Army in Candelaria, Quezon. ERIK ARAZAS

"The purges have not really stopped," he said.

Mabanta said the remains of the six rebels who were buried yesterday were dug up by soldiers in "fresh mass graves" in Magdalena, Laguna, and Mauban, Quezon.

"This would prove that the NPA rebels are at it again, killing their own comrades," said Col. Efren Orbon, commander of Task Force Makiling that operates in the so-called Calabarzon area.

Mabanta said the communist rebels were responsible for the killing of 232 people in the past five years, on top of some 4,000 of their comrades who had been murdered in the previous decade.

Mabanta said the military had recovered the bodies of more than 200 victims from secret mass graves around Mount Banahaw and nearby areas in the 1980s. They were accorded a decent burial in individual graves between 1988 and 1989.

Fifty-two of the victims are buried at the graveyard in Candelaria.

"Some were accused" of being military informers, some were accused of "veering away from the party line," and the others were "deemed unfit for their organization," Mabanta said.

The military also presented to the media 12 former NPA rebels from Laguna and Oriental Mindoro.

One of the former rebels was identified as Severino Ranuda, alias Ka Benjie. He is now a policeman assigned at the detachment of the 415th PNP Provincial Mobile Group. ***With a report from AFP***

US says RP military, Reds, Moro rebels guilty of rights violations

From page A1

ernment human rights organizations and other independent fact-finding missions. It even conducted extensive research and confirmation of the facts it had collated.

"We have done our utmost to ensure the accuracy, objectivity and integrity of the Reports. The Reports speak for themselves. They also give a voice to the voiceless. They shed cleansing light on the darkest of abuses. And they provide a benchmark for improvement. In short, they are a force for freedom," Secretary of State Colin Powell said.

Powell said the reports, which covered 190 countries, were an expression of the US government's commitment to advance abroad agreed upon human rights principles.

The report on the Philippines said the government was generally ineffective in reforming law enforcement and legal institutions. "Judges and prosecutors are poorly paid, overburdened, remain susceptible to corruption and the influence of the wealthy and powerful, often failed to provide due process and equal justice," it said.

Beheading

The report said the Abu Sayyaf Group (ASG) committed "numerous kidnapping and killings, including summary beheadings of hostages and local residents."

"The ASG's many kidnappings, and its proclivity for beheading many of its victims to induce the payment of ransom, led to an intense government crackdown beginning in July, when the President cited the existence of a 'state of lawlessness' in Basilan," the report said.

But it said the military and police also committed abuses in their pursuit of the terrorists.

"The crackdown led to the capture of many ASG members, who were charged with murder, kidnapping, and other violent crimes, and ordered held without bail," the report said.

The reports also noted the sorry state of Philippine prisons. Provincial jails and prisons are "overcrowded, have limited exercise and sanitary facilities and provide prisoners with inadequate diet." In Metro Manila, jails operate at 250 percent of capacity and 85 percent of the inmates are unable to post bail.

Citing a CHR report, the report said the Manila City Jail was "unfit for human habitation, housing 3,400 inmates in facilities designed to hold 1,000 inmates."

Because of insufficient subsistence allowance, inmates often depend on their families for food, according to the report.

The report also expressed alarm over the continued growth of the number of firms using contractual labor, rampant abuse of child labor, discrimination against women in the workplace and trafficking in children and women.

Palace to probe reports of rights violations

By Carlito Pablo and TJ Burgonio

MALACAÑANG yesterday said it would investigate reports that human rights violations had been committed in the course of the government's campaign against the Abu Sayyaf.

Presidential spokesperson Rigoberto Tiglao issued this statement even as he pointed out that the government took steps to ensure that civil liberties were protected while government forces were cracking down on the Abu Sayyaf and their sympathizers.

"When there was a crackdown, the military was very strictly told to adhere to legal procedures," Tiglao said, referring to military operations in Basilan and Zamboanga City.

Scores of alleged Abu Sayyaf members and supporters were arrested last year.

"Even the Department of Justice sent a team led by (Senior State) Prosecutor (Jovencito) Zuño to ensure that no human rights violations are committed," Tiglao said.

"Even so we will investigate in detail these allegations," Tiglao said.

Police officials were not as diplomatic as Tiglao as they dismissed as unfounded the US State Department's report that some policemen were engaged in extra-judicial killings.

"So far we have not monitored any incident of any extra judicial action by the PNP personnel in so far as criminal suspects are concerned," said Chief Supt. Crescencio Maralit, national police spokesperson.

He said there was significant drop in the number of complaints of human rights violations, mainly arbitrary arrest and detention, filed against policemen last year.

On the State Department's finding that police corruption remained rampant, Maralit admitted that some policemen had been engaged in extortion. But he said the police leadership had not been remiss in punishing the erring policemen.

Some 200 policemen were dismissed for engaging extortion last year, according to Maralit.

"We had some cases of extortion but those who were reported were meted disciplinary sanctions. If not demoted, they are suspended, depending on the gravity of their offense," he said.

'Basyang' packing . . .

From page A1

200 kph. It was expected to move northwest at a speed of 11 kph.

It is forecast to be 300 km east of Aparri, Cagayan, or 340 km southeast of Basco, Batanes, by Friday afternoon.

"There remains some indications that this disturbance may track more northward and move directly toward southern Japan," a Pagasa bulletin said.

Public Storm Signal No. 1 remained in effect yesterday over northern and eastern Samar, Catanduanes, Sorsogon, Albay and Camarines provinces where rains and winds of up to 60 kph will be experienced today. Coastal waters will be moderate to rough.

An average of 20 typhoons hit the country every year. The last one, Lingling, which struck last November, killed more than 200 people, destroyed 800 houses and caused damage in infrastructure and farms in 12 provinces amounting to half a billion pesos. ***With a report from AP***

Germans find sleeping . . .

From page A1

"In the beginning employees were skeptical about the project," town spokesperson Frank Kaethler said Monday. "But then they were happier and they started working better."

Kaethler said Vechta started the project because it had too much work for too few employees and no budget to hire new civil servants.

A local health insurance company gave them courses on napping.

Research by the Institute for Sleep Research and Medicine in Regensburg found that 22 percent of the overall German population took naps.

But the head of the institute, Juergen Zulley, said only Vechta appeared to have implemented a sleeping-on-the-job project.

"Work and sleep are normally seen as opposites and many firms don't want it to be said that their employees sleep in their company," Zulley said. *Reuters*

TERRORISM'S VICTIMS

A family of four returns to its farmland in upper Mahayahay, Maluso, Basilan, near the jungle base camp of US Special Forces and the Philippine Marines. Dozens of villagers who fled their homes in fear over atrocities committed by the Abu Sayyaf have started to come back to their villages saying they feel secure with the presence of US and government troops in their midst. REUTERS

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PEACE BONDS

RCBC exec denies Code-NGO claim

By Cynthia D. Balana

AN OFFICIAL of the Rizal Commercial Banking Corp. yesterday said the controversial P10-billion zero coupon bonds it purchased for the Code-NGO last year were never sold in the secondary market.

Testifying before the Senate committee on finance which is investigating the issuance of the Poverty Eradication and Alleviation Certificates (PEACe), Jaime Panganiban, RCBC executive vice president, denied the claim of Code-NGO that the bonds bought by RCBC for P10.160 billion were resold in the secondary market.

Danilo Songco, Code-NGO national coordinator, earlier claimed that the bonds were resold in the secondary market just to "oversimplify" the issue for the public.

Panganiban said the bonds were bought back by RCBC itself for P11.996 billion. As a result, it earned a P200-million underwriter's fee from buying back the bonds.

"What we have here is not an oversimplification, but a commercial bank duping itself by front-loading the money to buy the bonds for Code-NGO at P10.169 billion and buying it back for P11.996 billion just so Code-NGO could get its P1.8 billion profit," Sen. Teresa Aquino-Oreta said.

"In other words, the PEACe bond deal was nothing but a sham to favor this civil society organization," said Oreta who has sought to characterize the whole process of the zero coupon bond issuance as a conspiracy to favor Code-NGO which is chaired by a sister of Finance Secretary Jose Isidro Camacho.

Sen. John Osmeña, the committee chair, said RCBC would have to answer to its stockholders for allowing the bank to participate in such a transaction.

"You know, the total income of RCBC for one year is P3 billion. The amount of money that they gave away to Code-NGO in one day is P1.8 billion. So they should explain to their stockholders why they gave away P1.8 billion in profit," he said.

Also at the hearing, the Bureau of Treasury's electronic bidding program designer suggested that the bureau had resorted to a manual auction to limit the number of bidders to 19 in order to grant the winning bid a 20 percent withholding tax exemption under the 19-Lender Rule.

Rene Monteverde, programmer of Moneyline Telerate, said he was instructed at the last minute to include the 19-Lender Rule feature in the design for the electronic bidding of the bonds.

Monteverde, whose firm has long been the treasury bureau's electronic bidding designer, said he needed one to three months to prepare a new electronic bidding program that included the 19-Lender feature.

But he said the bureau decided to forego the electronic bidding and went ahead with the auction using the manual bidding system.

Osmeña said "the stage was set so they could not use electronic bidding."

"Under manual bidding, they could easily tamper with the bids," he said.

RP to buy old Taiwanese jets

THE PHILIPPINES is negotiating to buy 24 F5-E fighter jets from Taiwan for a token fee to strengthen its ill-equipped air force, Vice President and Foreign Secretary Teofisto Guingona said yesterday.

Guingona said the talks had been kept secret "for quite some time" for reasons he did not divulge, but said it was a commercial transaction that should not upset Taiwan's rival China.

"It's purely a commercial transaction. There's nothing wrong with it," Guingona told reporters.

Taiwan has no diplomatic relations with the Philippines, which has a "one-China" policy that recognizes Beijing instead of Taipei.

To prevent a potential diplomatic row, Guingona said the fighter jets would be sold first to a "private firm" which would in turn sell them to the Philippine Air Force.

But the sale depends on the approval of the US government, which licensed Taiwan the technology to make the single-seater F-5Es in the 1970s, foreign officials said.

Taiwan's China Times newspaper reported last week that Washington had shown no objection to the deal, as it would boost the Philippines' US-backed campaign against Abu Sayyaf Muslim rebels.

Taiwan is phasing out 100 F-5Es and twin-seater F-5Fs as it revamps its air force with advanced F-16A/Bs, French-made Mirage 2000-5s and home-made Indigenous Defense Fighters.

A high-ranking diplomatic source here said Taiwan had agreed to sell the fighter jets at a bargain price to Manila on condition that Taiwanese President Chen Shui-bian visit the Philippines.

Official trips by Taiwanese officials to countries that recognize Beijing routinely incur the Chinese government's wrath.

Manila would also have to grant fishing rights to Taiwanese trawlers in a channel off Batanes, the high-ranking source said.

Taipei in addition wants Taiwanese pilots to train in the Philippines, the source said.

Taiwan reportedly does not have enough air space to train its pilots in 10 squadrons of ultra-fast jets including F-16s and the Mirage 2000-5, and is asking Manila to allow its air force to land in the former US air base at Clark north of Manila, the source added. **AFP**

PNP chief's term extension cut

PRESIDENT Macapagal-Arroyo has changed her mind about extending the term of national police chief Leandro Mendoza, who is due to retire this month, for another nine months.

She told dzMM late Monday that Mendoza would just serve for an additional six months.

She said a nine-month extension for Mendoza was too long. She said she did not want to take away too much from the term of Mendoza's designated successor, police deputy chief Hermogenes Ebdane.

Ebdane will retire in December 2004.

The President announced late last year that she would extend Mendoza's term.

Last month she said the extension would be for nine months.

With the latest presidential pronouncement, Mendoza will only be staying on until September.

While she was against "overstaying" government officials in principle, the President said she was making an exception in Mendoza's case because Ebdane would not be retiring soon anyway. ***Dona Pazzibugan***

Bustillo, 79

RETIRED Constabulary Lt. Adriano B. Bustillo Sr. of Malaybalay, Bukid-non, died on March 1 after a lingering illness. He was 79.

He is survived by wife Betty, and children Marjorie, Lilian, Perla, Adrianita, Adriano Jr., Henry, Winlove, Ronnie, Reynald and Adriano III.

His remains lie at the residence at No. 12 Dalton Pass St., Veterans Village, Barangay Holy Spirit, Quezon City.

Interment will be on Saturday at the Libingan ng mga Bayani in Fort Bonifacio, Makati City.

Tax credit probers too timid—Moreno

MISAMIS Oriental Rep. Oscar Moreno yesterday dismissed Task Force 156 as "too timid" in asserting its duties to investigate and prosecute cases involved in the so-called tax credit scam.

This after task force officials told a House hearing yesterday that they learned about the office of the ombudsman's filing of a consolidated case against the Chingkoe group of companies only after Moreno delivered a privilege speech assailing this move early this year.

"Either they're too timid or passive or are silent participants to the whitewash of the scam," Moreno said after the hearing as he expressed disappointment over the actuations of the task force on the matter..

Moreno was referring to his earlier accusation against Ombudsman Aniano Desierto of trying to whitewash the tax credit scam by filing a consolidated plunder case against the Chingkoe group of companies, one of 64 companies being investigated in the P5.3 billion scam. He had pointed out that Desierto did not file charges against oil firm executives who were found to have taken part in the fraudulent use of tax credit certificates.

THE DAILY GOSPEL

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1st Reading: Dt 4:1, 5-9
Gospel: Mt 5:17-19

Jesus said to his disciples, "Do not think that I have come to remove the Law and the Prophets. I have not come to remove but to fulfill them. I tell you this: as long as heaven and earth last, not the smallest letter or stroke of the Law will change until all is fulfilled.

So then, whoever breaks the least important of these commandments and teaches others to do the same will be the least in the kingdom of heaven. On the other hand, whoever obeys them and teaches others to do the same will be great in the kingdom of heaven."

Commentary

Matthew's gospel was born in and for a Jewish Christian community. "The Law and the Prophets" means the Bible as Jesus knew it. The Law was very precious to a Jew. It was the gift, which made them God's people. It was a privilege, a path to wisdom, understanding and intimacy with God (See today's first reading, Deuteronomy 4). Matthew's Christian community remained rooted in their beloved spiritual heritage, and recognized Christ as its fulfillment. For us, too, on our Lenten pathway, it will be very enriching to return to our roots each day. In the first reading from the Jewish Bible, we meet storytellers, mystics and poets who ponder their nation's pilgrimage and discover God's faithful love. We read the words, which Jesus knew and treasured, which shaped his mind and heart.

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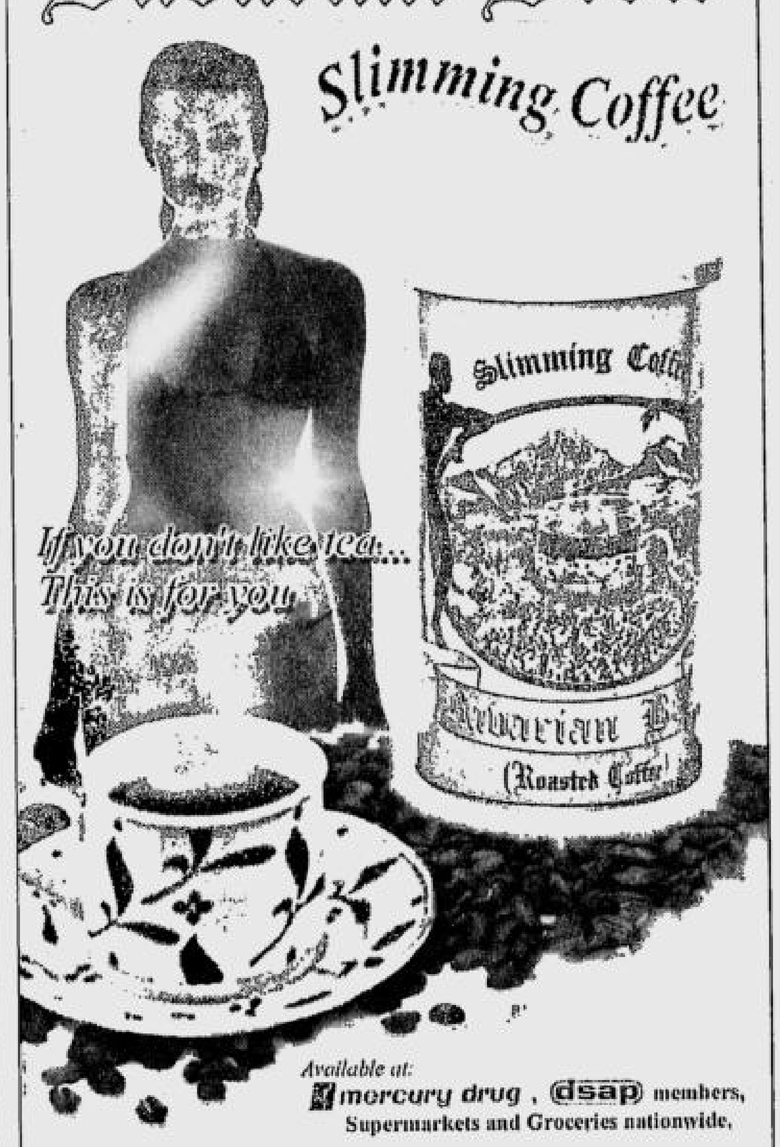

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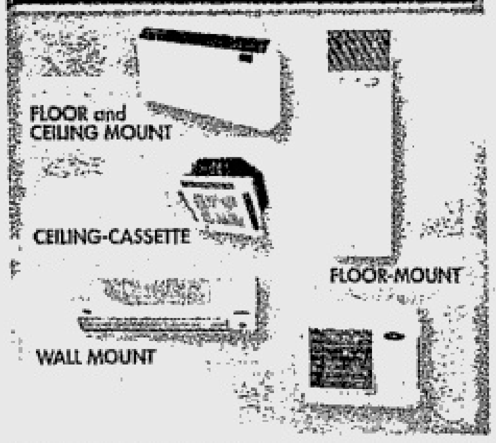

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Quacks

EDITORIAL

TO win the public over to his side and get the *masa* to support whatever reckless adventure he is hatching up, Joseph Estrada has cast himself in the role of a pitiful victim of gross injustice. In his latest melodramatic spiel, for instance, Estrada told lawyer Sigfrid Fortun that he was rejecting the Sandiganbayan's decision to name him as his counsel de officio. "They have taken away my office," said the disgraced former president. "They have taken away my dignity. And they will take away my life."

The reality, however, is that it isn't Estrada who is being beaten to a pulp. It is the courts of law and the entire system of justice that are being savaged by Estrada and his lawyers with the vicious propaganda offensive they have launched.

The courts, and especially the Sandigabayan which is trying all the cases filed against him, have been giving Estrada every consideration and concession possible, starting with his detention in the air-conditioned comfort of the presidential suite of the Veterans Memorial Medical Center. They have accepted and deliberated upon every motion and petition his lawyers could think of, so that as of the last count there were more than 120 of them. The Supreme Court has taken the extraordinary step of creating a special division to handle all his cases so that he would get what every person who is wrongly accused wants: a speedy trial. And in handling the cases with so much care and patience, the court has handed Estrada and his lawyers what they want: a long trial. Thus, 10 months after Estrada's arrest, the prosecution is just beginning to present its witnesses.

But even this isn't slow enough for Estrada and his lawyers. They have accused the courts of railroading his trial. And Estrada himself has dismissed all of his nine lawyers, saying he has lost hope of ever getting justice from the courts.

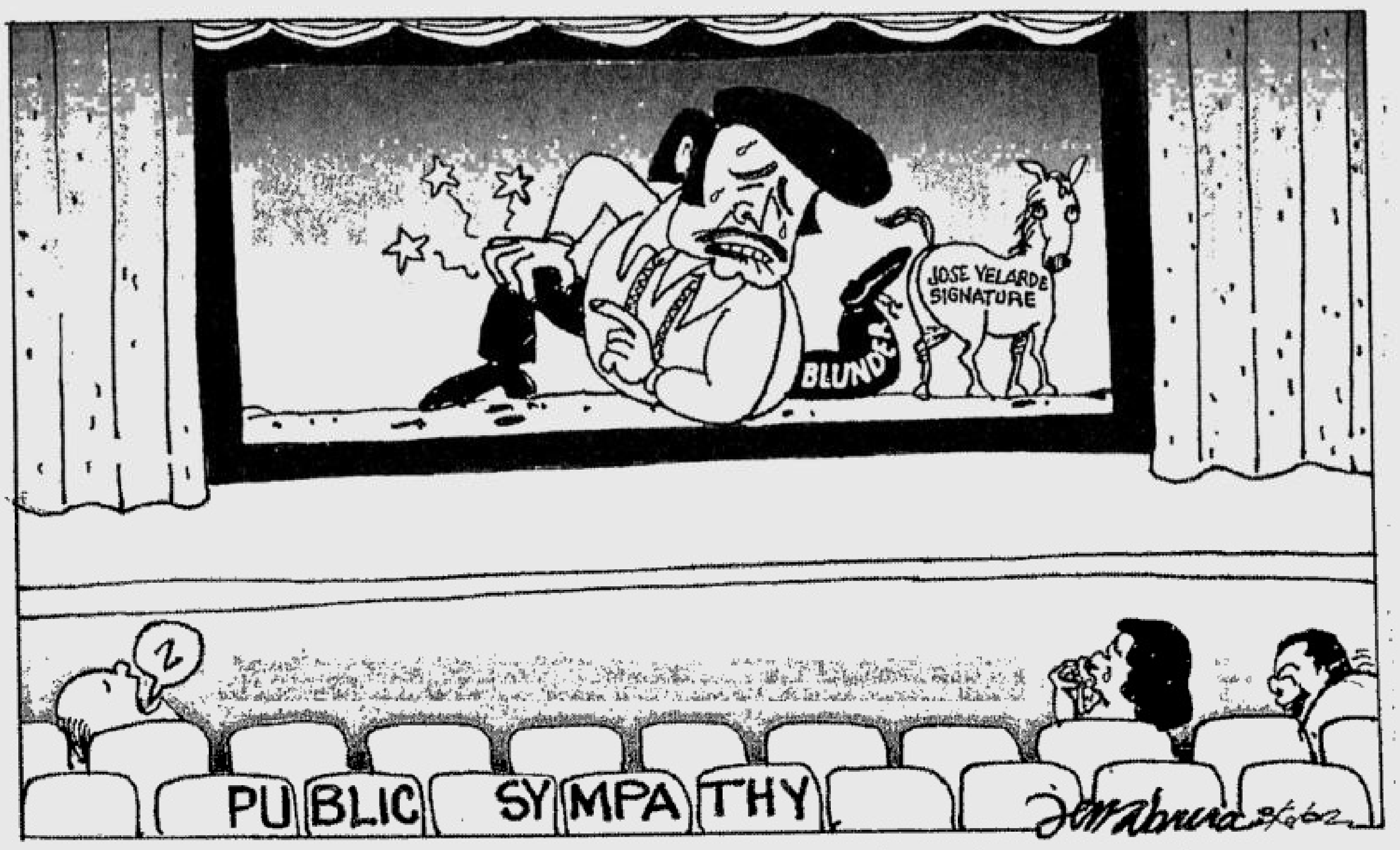
It's a contemptuous and dangerous view that has been articulated by defense lawyers and client alike. From the very beginning of the trial, Estrada's lawyers showed little respect for the court when they boycotted the first hearing in October last year. Even then, one of Estrada's nine lawyers, Rene Saguisag, already accused the Sandiganbayan justices of trying to "publicly embarrass" his client. At another time, a female justice was forced to order Saguisag's eviction from the courtroom when he refused to stop talking out of turn. Then the defense lawyers accused two of three justices hearing the cases of bias and demanded that they inhibit themselves.

This campaign of vilification has intensified recently. Last week in open court, Saguisag (again) complained that the cases against Estrada were being railroaded. "We don't believe we can get justice in this court," Saguisag declared, prompting the chair of the Special Division, Justice Minita Nazario to warn him to be "careful with your language." After Estrada dismissed his lawyers, it was Raymond Fortun's turn to heap abuse on other lawyers and the court. "Whether from PAO, *ampao* or *siopao*," Estrada would reject the services of any lawyer, Fortun said referring to the court-designated lawyers from the Public Attorney's Office. Echoing Estrada's lament, Fortun claimed that special courts are created "not to dispense justice but to exact vengeance." And to show he had learned a few things from his client. Fortun called the wrath of the gods down on the justices: "*Sana tamaan ng kidlat ang mga* justices *na iyan.*"

Coming from Estrada, such bitter outbursts might have been understandable. But the last person who should be mouthing them should be an officer of the court, which is what Estrada lawyers are supposed to be.

It's time the court, be it the Sandiganbayan or the Supreme Court, told these lawyers they can't get away with destroying the reputation of justices and casting doubts on the integrity of the courts. Citations for contempt are called for, and the courts should hasten to do so before these lawyers can do any further damage.

And if these lawyers are really honest and honorable, they ought to find other jobs. If the courts are incapable of rendering impartial justice, like they say, they should stop earning a living from the practice of law. Otherwise they are no better than quack doctors who promise relief or cures where there is none.



Save Nayong Pilipino and other parks

AS I SEE IT

Neal H. Cruz

PARKS and open spaces continue to be gobbled up by concrete in Metro Manila. In other countries, governments buy up private lands and convert them into parks. In the Philippines, it is the opposite. Government agencies themselves convert what are already parks into concrete and asphalt. This, in spite of vehement opposition from the public. The loss of Mehan Garden in Manila to a commercial parking building and to a school that already has an existing building, and the impending loss of the magnificent Arroceros Forest Park to a teachers' dormitory are just a few of the more glaring examples of this mindless and selfish landgrabbing.

The latest case of landgrabbing by government is the loss of part or perhaps the whole of it—of Nayong Pilipino to the Ninoy Aquino International Airport. Nayong Pilipino, a separate and independent entity, agreed to cede eight hectares of its 40-hectare theme park to the airport because international safety standards require that airports have so much space. The Naia lacks that minimum requirement, so it is gobbling up eight hectares of the adjacent Nayong Pilipino to meet that requirement. More than half of the regions depicted in the park, including the Vigan House and chocolate hills, will be obliterated by that Naia expansion.

But having put one foot inside the door, the Naia now wants to gobble up the rest of Nayong Pilipino—for a cargo terminal *kuno*. The greed of the airport management knows no bounds. The adjacent Villamor Air Base where the new—and controversial—Terminal 3 is located, will already be added to the airport complex. Now it wants the whole of Nayong Pilipino, too.

And yet 20 or so years ago, before Nayong Pilipino was constructed, the airport could have had the 40-hectare site for a song. But it did not want it. On the contrary, it wanted the site erased from the face of the earth. It was an ugly, stinking garbage dump infested with flies and vermin. Airline passengers leaving the airport could see it and smell it. It was a bad introduction of tourists to the Philippines.

So then First Lady Imelda Marcos instructed then Public Works Undersecretary Aber Canlas to build on top of it a theme park showcasing the different regions of the Philippines. It was an introduction to the country. For tourists who don't have plenty of time, they can see the whole of the Philippines in one place. For those who have more time, the park will hopefully prompt them to go to some of the places that interest them. For transit passengers with a few hours to kill before the next flight, it was a good place to spend the time. For Filipinos, it was a fun place to acquaint the children with their country. And for Metro Manila residents who want some open space, fresh air and greenery, it was a refuge from the concrete jungle. You can fish in its pond or nap in the shade or picnic with your family.

It was so successful that Indonesian President Suharto sent five engineers to study it for more than a week and then built a bigger theme park in his own country modeled after Nayong Pilipino. Like People Power, Nayong Pilipino is serving as a model and inspiration for other countries. They are things we can be proud of. We are not just *gaya-gaya, puto maya*; sometimes we are also copied.

But now comes the airport management wanting to obliterate all that, erase an original that has been copied by other countries, in order to put up unsightly warehouses for its cargo terminal in its place. Worse, it is not willing to pay a fair price for it. The fair market value of the eight hectares being ceded to is P500 million. But the airport management wants to pay only a little more than half, P300 million.

In the first place, Nayong Pilipino is the wrong place for a cargo terminal. It is in the opposite direction of Terminal 3 where the passengers who will claim them will be. Since all domestic passengers will eventually be served by Terminal 2, the old domestic airport, Balabag, will be free and can serve as the cargo terminal. Not much money for improvement will be needed because it is already paved with concrete and it already has warehouses and hangars.

In the second place, the Naia should no longer be expanded. There is no more space for expansion. It is now a dangerous site for an international airport, surrounded as it is by many residential communities. The noise of the jet engines is bad for the health of the residents and one accident can easily wipe out scores of sleeping residents.

The airport that should be developed as our main international airport is the Diosdado Macapagal Airport in Clark. The Naia has only two runways perpendicular to each other. When one is being used, the other cannot be used at the same time. The Clark airport has four parallel heavy-duty runways built by the Americans. Four planes can land simultaneously. They can take the biggest and heaviest cargo planes ever built.

On the other hand, one end of the Naia runway is sinking because it was built on reclaimed land. That is why the runway has to be closed from time to time while workers pour more concrete and overlay it with more asphalt to make it level.

The sooner we accept these stark realities and move to a better location, the better for us; The forthcoming high-speed railway from Manila to Clark and the completion of the expansion of the North Luzon Expressway will make the Macapagal International Airport just next-door to Manila, even nearer than the Narita is to Tokyo.

So there is no need to make Nayong Pilipino extinct. On the contrary, we should all work harder to save it.

The trial

THERE'S THE RUB

Conrado de Quiros

I'M curious to know what the results would be if they took a survey of the public attitude toward Erap's trial. Which do people prefer, to try Erap or to allow him to go on exile?

I'm willing to bet that if such a survey were made, the majority—I just do not know if it would be an overwhelming one—would choose the latter.

Erap's case in fact, like the presence of American troops in the South, is another one of those things that shows the gap between popularity and morality, between what most people want done and what ought to be done.

I recall Pepe Miranda saying some weeks ago that President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo probably took comfort in surveys, among them Pulse Asia's, that showed the majority of Filipinos approved of American troops in the South. I said then, and say now, that that doesn't mean anything. You take another survey on whether Filipinos want to become a state of the United States or remain independent, and you will get an even bigger majority of Filipinos choosing the first. That doesn't mean government should now work for statehood. The popular thing isn't always the right thing.

The fallacy of relying on the popular thing is shown up here. If a survey says most Filipinos want Erap set free rather than tried, should we set him free?

There are a couple of reasons why I think a survey of that nature would yield those results. Which are also the two things we should strive mightily even now to push back if we are to get to first base in pinning Erap down for his crimes.

The first is cynicism.

The two persons who have expressed themselves forcefully in pursuing Erap's trial are Jaime Cardinal Sin and Fidel Ramos, two of the pillars of the first Edsa. Sin did so during his homily on the 16th anniversary of Edsa. The notion of allowing Erap to go on exile, he said, was an irresponsible and idiotic one. Forgiveness, he said, begins with repentance, reconciliation with justice. Ramos pretty much said the same thing the other day, shortly before he left on another trip abroad. We do not pursue Erap like the Furies, we become the laughingstock of the world. We allow Erap to go on exile, we become the doormat of the world.

All this is very well, except for one thing. Which is that Sin and Ramos are not exactly the best persons to lecture the country on the evils of pillaging the treasury. Ramos himself stands accused of masterminding the "mother of all scams," which is the Amari deal. And Sin's bitter expostulations here stand in stark contrast to his vast silence in the face of the plunder wreaked by Cory Aquino's "Kamag-anak Inc." I do not know that it is only Erap's horde, particularly the one represented in "Edsa III," who will see in this a case of selective perception, or double standards.

The second is apathy.

Or more than apathy in Erap's case, a powerful sense of "he may be a crook, but he's our crook." That has been put to words by *sari-sari* store keepers, *labanderas* and slum dwellers in TV interviews. Coupled with this country's perverted sense of Christian charity, encapsulated in the past in that word "reconciliation," it's a cinch most folk will think nothing of allowing Erap to live a semi-retiree's life, puttering in a garden, in San Juan. If this country can reconcile with Marcos and Imelda, who were two of the most hated figures before their fall, they can reconcile with Erap, who continues to be adored by his legions after his fall.

But more than that, in the end we do not really have a concept of corruption in this country. That may sound like a cynical statement, but it's true. You need no further proof of that than that senators and congressmen are able to postulate exile as an alternative to trial for Erap. Do you hear a public outcry over that? You would think it was a perfectly reasonable proposition. This country expects public officials to take from the tills, a logic that proceeds from election itself, where candidates spend millions to win. And it's ingrained in the culture, as the late judge, Martin Ocampo, lamented. Nobody gets a poor honest man for a godfather to a baptism or wedding. They get a rich corrupt official to do the honors.

I am not saying that it's useless to pursue the corruption charges against Erap. I am saying that pursuing the corruption charges against Erap demands a lot from us. It's not just Erap who's going to be tried in that trial. It's all of us. It's our sense of corruption, it's our sense of justice, it's our sense of right and wrong. It's so even now, well before Erap has been brought to court.

One thing that should help to push it along is to make it more universal. To say that trying Erap for plunder is just the beginning. We mean to do the same thing to his predecessors—to Imelda, who was an even bigger crook, to Cory and/or her *kamaganaks* who frittered away the country's one chance to turn things around, to Ramos who merely took with more finesse.

But there's the rub. Will President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo, who is beholden to Cory and Ramos, if not to Imelda, ever say that?

* * *

I got several letters in the email from readers complaining about my column last Monday in INQ7. They had read it before, they said, and wondered why I was rehashing old stuff. I could not understand what they were talking about until I checked and found out that Online had inadvertently published a column I wrote more than a month ago.

What can I say? First, my thanks that readers follow this column faithfully and have long memories. And second, well, that is the price you get for settling for freebies. The hard copy, or newspaper, is just P15, in case you didn't know.

Estrada's end game

ANALYSIS

Amando Doronila

THE FRONTAL assault launched by deposed President Joseph Estrada and his lawyers on the Supreme Court and the Sandiganbayan—in fact on the judicial system—is best understood in the light of the fact that among all Philippine political and bureaucratic institutions, only the Supreme Court and the Armed Forces survived the constitutional crisis of October 2000-January 2001 virtually unscathed and unified.

Because they served as the pillars of stability while confidence in the presidency, the Cabinet, the legislature and the political parties was crumbling, they prevented the country from plunging into an orgy of violence and civil war.

This is not to say that the judicial system is unflawed. It has its weaknesses—among which are some of the courts are tainted with corruption, courts are clogged and many cases move slowly—but in critical cases involving controversial constitutional issues, the higher courts have proved equal to their challenges. One can cite, for example, the Supreme Court decisive rulings on the legitimacy of the accession of President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo to the presidency.

Having been crushed by the political institutions which Estrada undermined through his personalistic style of presidency, Estrada is now attacking the judicial system before which he faces cases that will decide his life or death. He is fighting for his life, and a desperate man knows no rules except to destroy institutions that stand in the way of his personal and political future.

Whatever the faults or the perceived anti-Estrada bias of the Sandiganbayan and the Supreme Court, the accusations hurled by Estrada and his lawyers are not only "baseless and unfair" (as former Sen. Jovito Salonga described them) but also constitute scorched earth warfare to save a man who has tried to avoid confronting evidence piled up against him in the impeachment trial and in the trial at the Sandiganbayan. The attack on the Sandiganbayan is based on the reductionist allegation that his fate is sealed because it has shown bias against him, and so since he does not expect to get justice from the judicial system, he might as well put his fate in the hands of the mobs to resolve.

If Estrada and his lawyers succeed in discrediting the courts and the judicial system as incapable of dispensing fair justice, the effect would be to call into question all the decisions of the Supreme Court legitimizing the Macapagal administration, and all the rulings of the Sandiganbayan which have knocked back the unrelenting efforts of Estrada's lawyers to delay the trial indefinitely.

The attack on the judicial system is even more dangerous than Estrada's attempt to incite class war through the contention that the rich had made a conspiracy against him and the masses. In his assault on the judicial system, Estrada is pursuing his demolition job of state institutions after he had damaged severely the parties, the legislature and the Cabinet as instruments of orderly constitutional rule.

Whether one agrees with the decision of the Supreme Court allowing the chief justice, Hilario Davide Jr., to swear in Ms Macapagal as President and subsequent decisions upholding the legitimacy of her government and denying immunity from criminal suits to Estrada, these decisions averted the country's plunge into chaos, and possibly a civil war.

In regard to the Armed Forces, the decision of the military hierarchy led by the then Chief of Staff, General Angelo Reyes, to withdraw support from Estrada was marked by a relatively solidified chain of command which dissenting voices like those of Gen. Benjamin Defensor, the Air Force chief, and retired Admiral Guillermo Wong, failed to break. Unlike in 1986, the chain of command was broken and the Armed Forces were split down the middle. From that time, the Armed Forces were fractured and the deep fissures were the sources of the seven coup attempts that plagued the Corazon Aquino presidency.

In the crisis of the Estrada administration, the Armed Forces were able to solidify behind a chain of command that avoided the fractures of 1986 and the Aquino coup years. The relative unity of the chain of command accounts for the fact that when Reyes made the move to withdraw, the services commanders just walked to the Edsa Shrine to join the oust-Estrada popular forces without even side-arms. If the Armed Forces were divided in January 2001, the outcome of the crisis would have been different and it was possible that we could have had a junta instead of a president sworn into office within the framework of a constitutional system.

Because an independent judicial system and an Armed Forces that decided to be more loyal to the interests of a stable state stand in the way of Estrada's efforts to save himself from the gallows, it is understandable that his fire is now concentrated on the judicial system and the military. This also explains why there is an unrelenting effort to foment unrest inside the Armed Forces and the national police and to recruit soldiers into the coup plots riding disturbances created by agitation on the poor to rise in rebellion.

But Estrada has forgotten that it takes a powerful moral outrage to cause soldiers to defect and switch allegiance. A basic question to ask is: will soldiers die for a restoration of Estrada or even for his exile? He may want to go on a hunger strike, and no one will stop him from dying. But will the poor die for him? They have been already on a prolonged state of hunger. They might as well let Estrada perish alone.

Lessons from a Garden

AT LARGE

Rina Jimenez-David

ONLY a woman would have noticed. "I see you're wearing high heels," San Fernando, La Union Mayor Mary Jane Ortega whispered to me in the middle of the Monday-morning flag raising at the provincial capitol. "I'll have someone buy you sandals because you won't be able to walk through the Botanical Garden later."

About an hour later as we arrived at the La Union Botanical Garden, perched atop the rolling terrain of the mountains that border San Fernando, it soon became clear how necessary the sandals would be.

I'd been invited to be the guest speaker at the rites marking the Garden's sixth anniversary. But first, there were the ribbon cutting ceremonies at the butterfly museum and the "living diorama," a walk-through area that allows visitors to quickly "survey" the plant kingdom through samples of all kinds of plants from fungi (which are not plants at all) to trees. It was no joke, or more aptly, no stroll, getting to the ribbon-cutting sites. We went up and down steep steps, crossed bamboo bridges, walked down paths, and paused to catch our breaths beneath the shade of trees and awnings. Thanks for the sandals, it was no torture, but for a decidedly out-of-shape 40-something, neither was it a picnic.

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STILL, it was a pleasure visiting the La Union Botanical Garden. Once a wild and overgrown piece of public land that had been years before slated for a smelting plant, it is today a lovely oasis, planted to shady trees and a variety of flowerbeds, bushes and ornamentals. One area is devoted to different kinds of bamboo, the tops coming together to form what one visitor described as a "cathedral." Then there is the "Arid Garden," planted to different kinds of cacti. It used to be called the "Mexican Garden" until a visiting ambassador from Israel commented that cacti grow in other countries as well. In fact, he said, one of the cacti on display is known in their country as the "sabra," a name native-born Israelis have adopted with pride. Thus the Garden was renamed to forestall accusations of "favoritism." There is also a Japanese Garden, with a visiting Japanese landscaper volunteering his services to make it more "authentic."

There is as well a mini-zoo, an orchidarium and a fragrance garden, planted to fragrant plants so that even the blind could enjoy the pleasures of the Botanical Garden. Medicinal plants and herbs are likewise planted around an ingenious sundial. All around the Garden, especially beneath the trees, can be found picnic tables for groups and families. The La Union Botanical Garden, says Dr. R.M. del Rosario, a botanist connected with the National Museum who is also project director of the LUBG, is only one of three botanical gardens in the country. It is not enough for an area to be planted to a variety of plants to be called a botanical garden, notes Del Rosario. It must also be organized in such a way that it educates visitors, most importantly about the need to conserve and protect the environment.

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One woman's dream soon became a conjugal project, though, as crucial start-up funds came by way of then Rep. Victor Ortega's congressional allotments. Today, the congressman is La Union governor while Mary Jane is on her second term as San Fernando mayor. But the LUBG is still struggling to raise funds to sustain its operations. With entrance fees as low as P30, "half price *pa* for students!" says Mary Jane, the Garden must look for additional funding sources. One of the most promising: a stand of mango trees that, when they reach full maturity, could provide much-needed income.

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The barangay chair appeared moved by his recognition, promising he would continue to harness his neighbors' support in looking after the Garden, and to protect it from vandals and thieves.

The Garden may have begun as "one woman's dream," I said in my talk, but today it is no longer just one person's project, a couple's commitment or even a political dynasty's showcase. It is now the pride of the people of San Fernando and of La Union, and one legacy they should all work together to preserve and protect. I had half-seriously suggested that Mary Jane invite Lito Atienza to see for himself just what a difference a botanical garden makes, to make him appreciate that trees and plants do not stand in the way of development. Would that all city executives put as much value on the environment as they do park-and-ride buildings.

Spotting the enemy without gadgets of today

LOOKING BACK

Ambeth R. Ocampo

WHENEVER security guards make a routine inspection of the trunk of my car (sometimes even the glove compartment) before I enter a shopping mall parking lot, I wonder whether they can actually spot a bomb when they see one. While I do appreciate this wasted effort I think of all the action movies I have seen and whether these actually contribute to the knowledge of security guards when they do the same cursory examination on bags and bodies at mall entrances. Will they be able to identify the parts of a bomb in a bag or woman's bosom when they feel it? We may not be guards or police but we go through a similar exercise when we see photographs of terrorists, criminals and those fired from companies advertised in the classified ads. Can we point out a terrorist when we see one? Many mugshots in the "most wanted" list carry million peso price tags, but unlike the TV game shows there seem to be few winners. Perhaps the squealers would rather remain anonymous to enjoy their winnings.

In these days of sophisticated identification methods: fingerprints, voice prints, a scan of the eye, or DNA, terrorists and criminals are still able to elude the law. Surely, it was more difficult during the Philippine Revolution and the Filipino-American War to spot rebels and criminals. Photography was relatively new in the 19th century and prisons were not equipped to take mugshots. In the Newberry Library in Chicago is a box containing various documents relating to prisoners in Bilibid prison in Manila covering the years 1883-1889. I went through the documents particularly all prisoners with the surname "Aguinaldo." The fact that these people may have been distantly related to Emilio Aguinaldo kept me reading through the cases including a hog sent to Bilibid because it disturbed the parish priest of Ermita in 1893. Poor thing was turned into a *lechon* feast for the prisoners.

Apolinario Mabini was arrested and turned over to Bilibid on October 1896 but due to his paralysis was imprisoned in the San Juan de Dios hospital. He was released in June 1897. Antonio Luna was arrested in November 1885 and described as:

"A native of Binondo, 19 years old, single, student of pharmacy. His father was Don Joaquin Luna, his mother Laur[eana] de Luna. He could read and write. He was of regular height with a wide forehead, his complexion was '*moreno*,' his hair black, his nose flat (chato), his face round, he had a bit of a beard and black eyes. Distinguishing mark was a mark on the right cheek."

During the Filipino-American War would the enemy find Luna in a downtown crowd based on the above description? With a photograph things would be simpler, but these descriptions of "most wanted" people of the time force us to use our imagination in a way a photograph cannot do. In March 1900 the enemy was hot on the trail of Gen. Servillano Aquino who was described as:

"...about twenty six or twenty seven years old. Height five feet ten inches. Rather light complexion. Weight probably 115 pounds. Nose was a trifle sharp not flat, mouth regular, teeth regular. [He sports] a white thickish moustache. Wears hair medium long, and parts on side. Good-looking, except for decided squint in eyes. He has a scar from a wound received June 1899 at Mexico, [Pampanga]. A flesh wound in rear top of shoulder. Not known whether right or left.

"Every possible effort will be made to capture this man, and if you get on the trail you must follow him so long as there is any prospect of success, living on the country and employing much guides as may be necessary at not to exceed one dollar Mexican, per day. Expense will not however be spared in making the capture, and every possible effort will be made to this end..."

The above was dug up in the US Library of Congress by JB Capino and sent to me via e-mail, it reminded me of a similar text on Gen. Miguel Malvar dated December 1901:

"Complexion rather dark, weighs about 145 pounds, about 5 feet 2 inches in height, short and heavy set, with unusually thick and heavy jawbones, hair black, with perhaps a few gray hairs, about 40 to 42 years old, wears a gold ring with a stone set on the third finger of the left hand, feet a little broad, wears a 5 or 6 shoe (when wearing shoes), has well-shaped hands.

"His hair is liable to grow long in front of his ears, giving an appearance of small side whiskers. He usually wears a small black moustache, and while conversing with anyone is liable to bat his eyes in a peculiar way.

"Goes about the country with an Indian shirt and trousers cut off or rolled up to the knee (to avoid detection). If captured will affect being very simple, inoffensive and ignorant native who knows nothing, and will give a wrong name. Mouth large, nose ordinary, but slightly resembling Philippine nose, eyes black. Sometimes chews betel nut."

Malvar was slippery. Under the nose of the enemy he visited the Batangas towns of Santo Tomas and Lipa without being detected. With a rooster under his arms or atop a carabao he looked ordinary. Sometimes, I think that bombs and wanted people pass our way all the time because we are not looking in the right place and in the right way.

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Letter from prison

COMMENTARY

Belinda A. Aquino

HONOLULU—I receive a lot of letters from readers ranging from asking for information about scholarships to expressions of surprise like, "Do I know you from sometime (euphemism for many years) ago?" making me feel like a dinosaur, of course. I'm usually delighted to receive every single letter.

But recently, I got a letter which has been weighing heavily on my mind, that I just have to have it out. The short of it is that Muntinglupa may be holding an innocent man in prison since 1997, and that a grave miscarriage of justice may have occurred. I hope that the justice system in the Philippines can rectify this case, which involves the younger brother of my colleague here at the University of Hawaii at Manoa, Dr. Sabina Fajardo Swift, with whom I've talked extensively about her brother's case. Sabina and her husband Steve Swift are both researchers. They are very distressed by this continuing problem involving their brother, who they swear is innocent.

Remember the high-profile kidnapping case involving Japanese businessman Noboyuki Wakaoji of Mitsui Co. more than 10 years ago? This celebrity case put so much pressure on the Philippine government because it was bound to jeopardize Philippine-Japanese relations. An important businessman from Japan had been kidnapped. It was a sensitive matter. The Manila government had to produce a quick resolution of the case.

Irineo Fajardo, Sabina's brother, was one of those convicted for the kidnapping of Wakaoji with illegal detention. The original charge was kidnapping for ransom, but was amended later. The Church had a role in Wakaoji's release, and Jaime Cardinal Sin was quoted as saying that there was no ransom involved, just a "donation" to cover the victim's expenses. There had been reports that Mitsui had delivered a $3-million ransom in exchange for Wakaoji's release. That's false, the cardinal had asserted. When asked who the kidnappers were, the cardinal replied, "I know, but can't reveal their identities," a Philippine Daily Inquirer had reported then.

The police identified NPA hit men as the "culprits" and Fajardo, who worked in the Canlubang area, where Wakaoji was abducted, was picked up as one of the suspects. To cut a long story short, he was convicted in 1997, along with a co-accused. He swears he did not participate in the "caper," and he writes, "Because of my innocence, I appealed my case to the Supreme Court. I expected to be acquitted, but the High Court affirmed the lower court's decision." His only consolation was that he got a lighter sentence because the original charge had been amended. Still, it was a miscarriage of justice in his perspective.

His letter continues, "During my arrest, as I vividly recall, I suffered physical and mental torture when I was detained at Camp Crame. I was forced to admit the kidnapping case without the presence of legal counsel in the first weeks of my detention by the local authorities, similar to the fate of other prisoners during the dictatorship.

"What bothers me no end is why the government allows us to continue serving our sentence when the real perpetrators have confessed to the intelligence community for kidnapping Waokaoji...We were simply railroaded to prison to justify and answer for a case, in order for the bilateral relations of the Philippines and Japan to remain, and it's best for our economy not to be affected...

"I have written the cardinal numerous times since my imprisonment asking him for assistance with regard to my possible earlier discharge from prison, as he and several other priests have reliable information about the kidnappers' whereabouts, and I hope they were not liquidated. He has promised me, in response, blessings and pastoral prayers, but it seems that up to now, he has decided to keep mum about what transpired during negotiations for the captive's release, making me doubt about the Church transparency as we are all aware about the doctrines of separation of Church and State...All I know is that I'm truly innocent and made to suffer needlessly and it is only a matter of right that there should be legal options, aside from the humanitarian grounds for the government and other agencies involved...so we could go back to the threshold of society and lead simple and normal lives with our loving families."

Fajardo couldn't have argued his case better in this heart-rending and gut-wrenching letter. There's more but it cannot be reproduced entirely in this article due to space limitations. It is highly probable that the authorities are holding an innocent man in jail for five years now, and has still another five years in his sentence. He was tortured and denied his rights. That alone should have been an issue to reexamine his case. The case was political from the beginning, Fajardo argues, and he's right.

I'm appealing to the authorities on his behalf to review his case. I'm not a lawyer and Fajardo deserves one. At the very least, his case should be reopened. His family has made various attempts to attract attention to his case. Cardinal Sin should listen to his pleadings. He is key to a reexamination of this case.

Look at the situation—a man languishing in jail in the prime of his life when he should be out there contributing to society as he says, as a productive member. And he could be the wrong man because the real criminals are out there. The bottom line is justice, whose ends are not being served it seems in this very, very sad case. This is a matter for Amnesty International to look into if it doesn't get attention from the government pretty soon.

Belinda A. Aquino teaches Political Science and Asian Studies at the University of Hawaii at Manoa where she is also director of the Center for Philippine Studies.

THEY SAID

Helping

"We don't have a sinister plan here. We're here to help."

—Lt. Col. David Maxwell, reacting to protests against the presence of US troops in the Philippines

Trust in workers

"You should also put your trust in your people and in their abilities to make decisions. But in the end, you should see to it that these people would deliver during crunch time."

—Julio Sy Sr., president of Busco Sugar Milling Co. Inc., on his management style

Technical education

"The societal bias against technical education is real. We should have a major paradigm shift."

—Technical Education and Skills Development Authority head Lucy Lazo

Estrada's end game

ANALYSIS

Amando Doronila

THE FRONTAL assault launched by deposed President Joseph Estrada and his lawyers on the Supreme Court and the Sandiganbayan—in fact on the judicial system—is best understood in the light of the fact that among all Philippine political and bureaucratic institutions, only the Supreme Court and the Armed Forces survived the constitutional crisis of October 2000-January 2001 virtually unscathed and unified.

Because they served as the pillars of stability while confidence in the presidency, the Cabinet, the legislature and the political parties was crumbling, they prevented the country from plunging into an orgy of violence and civil war.

This is not to say that the judicial system is unflawed. It has its weaknesses—among which are some of the courts are tainted with corruption, courts are clogged and many cases move slowly—but in critical cases involving controversial constitutional issues, the higher courts have proved equal to their challenges. One can cite, for example, the Supreme Court decisive rulings on the legitimacy of the accession of President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo to the presidency.

Having been crushed by the political institutions which Estrada undermined through his personalistic style of presidency, Estrada is now attacking the judicial system before which he faces cases that will decide his life or death. He is fighting for his life, and a desperate man knows no rules except to destroy institutions that stand in the way of his personal and political future.

Whatever the faults or the perceived anti-Estrada bias of the Sandiganbayan and the Supreme Court, the accusations hurled by Estrada and his lawyers are not only "baseless and unfair" (as former Sen. Jovito Salonga described them) but also constitute scorched earth warfare to save a man who has tried to avoid confronting evidence piled up against him in the impeachment trial and in the trial at the Sandiganbayan. The attack on the Sandiganbayan is based on the reductionist allegation that his fate is sealed because it has shown bias against him, and so since he does not expect to get justice from the judicial system, he might as well put his fate in the hands of the mobs to resolve.

If Estrada and his lawyers succeed in discrediting the courts and the judicial system as incapable of dispensing fair justice, the effect would be to call into question all the decisions of the Supreme Court legitimizing the Macapagal administration, and all the rulings of the Sandiganbayan which have knocked back the unrelenting efforts of Estrada's lawyers to delay the trial indefinitely.

The attack on the judicial system is even more dangerous than Estrada's attempt to incite class war through the contention that the rich had made a conspiracy against him and the masses. In his assault on the judicial system, Estrada is pursuing his demolition job of state institutions after he had damaged severely the parties, the legislature and the Cabinet as instruments of orderly constitutional rule.

Whether one agrees with the decision of the Supreme Court allowing the chief justice, Hilario Davide Jr., to swear in Ms Macapagal as President and subsequent decisions upholding the legitimacy of her government and denying immunity from criminal suits to Estrada, these decisions averted the country's plunge into chaos, and possibly a civil war.

In regard to the Armed Forces, the decision of the military hierarchy led by the then Chief of Staff, General Angelo Reyes, to withdraw support from Estrada was marked by a relatively solidified chain of command which dissenting voices like those of Gen. Benjamin Defensor, the Air Force chief, and retired Admiral Guillermo Wong, failed to break. Unlike in 1986, the chain of command was broken and the Armed Forces were split down the middle. From that time, the Armed Forces were fractured and the deep fissures were the sources of the seven coup attempts that plagued the Corazon Aquino presidency.

In the crisis of the Estrada administration, the Armed Forces were able to solidify behind a chain of command that avoided the fractures of 1986 and the Aquino coup years. The relative unity of the chain of command accounts for the fact that when Reyes made the move to withdraw, the services commanders just walked to the Edsa Shrine to join the oust-Estrada popular forces without even side-arms. If the Armed Forces were divided in January 2001, the outcome of the crisis would have been different and it was possible that we could have had a junta instead of a president sworn into office within the framework of a constitutional system.

Because an independent judicial system and an Armed Forces that decided to be more loyal to the interests of a stable state stand in the way of Estrada's efforts to save himself from the gallows, it is understandable that his fire is now concentrated on the judicial system and the military. This also explains why there is an unrelenting effort to foment unrest inside the Armed Forces and the national police and to recruit soldiers into the coup plots riding disturbances created by agitation on the poor to rise in rebellion.

But Estrada has forgotten that it takes a powerful moral outrage to cause soldiers to defect and switch allegiance. A basic question to ask is: will soldiers die for a restoration of Estrada or even for his exile? He may want to go on a hunger strike, and no one will stop him from dying. But will the poor die for him? They have been already on a prolonged state of hunger. They might as well let Estrada perish alone.

Lessons from a Garden

AT LARGE

Rina Jimenez-David

ONLY a woman would have noticed. "I see you're wearing high heels," San Fernando, La Union Mayor Mary Jane Ortega whispered to me in the middle of the Monday-morning flag raising at the provincial capitol. "I'll have someone buy you sandals because you won't be able to walk through the Botanical Garden later."

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Irineo Fajardo, Sabina's brother, was one of those convicted for the kidnapping of Wakaoji with illegal detention. The original charge was kidnapping for ransom, but was amended later. The Church had a role in Wakaoji's release, and Jaime Cardinal Sin was quoted as saying that there was no ransom involved, just a "donation" to cover the victim's expenses. There had been reports that Mitsui had delivered a $3-million ransom in exchange for Wakaoji's release. That's false, the cardinal had asserted. When asked who the kidnappers were, the cardinal replied, "I know, but can't reveal their identities," a Philippine Daily Inquirer had reported then.

The police identified NPA hit men as the "culprits" and Fajardo, who worked in the Canlubang area, where Wakaoji was abducted, was picked up as one of the suspects. To cut a long story short, he was convicted in 1997, along with a co-accused. He swears he did not participate in the "caper," and he writes, "Because of my innocence, I appealed my case to the Supreme Court. I expected to be acquitted, but the High Court affirmed the lower court's decision." His only consolation was that he got a lighter sentence because the original charge had been amended. Still, it was a miscarriage of justice in his perspective.

His letter continues, "During my arrest, as I vividly recall, I suffered physical and mental torture when I was detained at Camp Crame. I was forced to admit the kidnapping case without the presence of legal counsel in the first weeks of my detention by the local authorities, similar to the fate of other prisoners during the dictatorship.

"What bothers me no end is why the government allows us to continue serving our sentence when the real perpetrators have confessed to the intelligence community for kidnapping Waokaoji...We were simply railroaded to prison to justify and answer for a case, in order for the bilateral relations of the Philippines and Japan to remain, and it's best for our economy not to be affected...

"I have written the cardinal numerous times since my imprisonment asking him for assistance with regard to my possible earlier discharge from prison, as he and several other priests have reliable information about the kidnappers' whereabouts, and I hope they were not liquidated. He has promised me, in response, blessings and pastoral prayers, but it seems that up to now, he has decided to keep mum about what transpired during negotiations for the captive's release, making me doubt about the Church transparency as we are all aware about the doctrines of separation of Church and State...All I know is that I'm truly innocent and made to suffer needlessly and it is only a matter of right that there should be legal options, aside from the humanitarian grounds for the government and other agencies involved...so we could go back to the threshold of society and lead simple and normal lives with our loving families."

Fajardo couldn't have argued his case better in this heart-rending and gut-wrenching letter. There's more but it cannot be reproduced entirely in this article due to space limitations. It is highly probable that the authorities are holding an innocent man in jail for five years now, and has still another five years in his sentence. He was tortured and denied his rights. That alone should have been an issue to reexamine his case. The case was political from the beginning, Fajardo argues, and he's right.

I'm appealing to the authorities on his behalf to review his case. I'm not a lawyer and Fajardo deserves one. At the very least, his case should be reopened. His family has made various attempts to attract attention to his case. Cardinal Sin should listen to his pleadings. He is key to a reexamination of this case.

Look at the situation—a man languishing in jail in the prime of his life when he should be out there contributing to society as he says, as a productive member. And he could be the wrong man because the real criminals are out there. The bottom line is justice, whose ends are not being served it seems in this very, very sad case. This is a matter for Amnesty International to look into if it doesn't get attention from the government pretty soon.

Belinda A. Aquino teaches Political Science and Asian Studies at the University of Hawaii at Manoa where she is also director of the Center for Philippine Studies.

THEY SAID

Helping

"We don't have a sinister plan here. We're here to help."

—Lt. Col. David Maxwell, reacting to protests against the presence of US troops in the Philippines

Trust in workers

"You should also put your trust in your people and in their abilities to make decisions. But in the end, you should see to it that these people would deliver during crunch time."

—Julio Sy Sr., president of Busco Sugar Milling Co. Inc., on his management style

Technical education

"The societal bias against technical education is real. We should have a major paradigm shift."

—Technical Education and Skills Development Authority head Lucy Lazo

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The stuff of true heroes

OUR government has declared our Filipino migrant workers as heroes, and to one mother, a son, like my Marcus Amorsolo Valdes, fit every nuance of the word.

He was born to a landed but rooted-to-the-earth kind of family. After his father died, his share of the land was given away by the agrarian bosses to his tenant. He was not to be cowed by that. Already with a family of his own, he decided to go abroad to give his family the best that he could.

From working as an artist for the Manila Intercontinental Hotel, he was sent to Bahrain Intercon, then Beijing Intercon and Jeddah Intercon. In those countries, he painted the royalty and the rich people, did exceptional art works, and was loved by his boss and his family. They treated him as family and he taught a daughter, Janine, to be an artist and she graduated as one.

In Jeddah, they sent his painting for inclusion in a seven Arabic nation competition, and he won. He was ecstatic, although a late entry, an Arab's, garnered first place. He understood, he was a foreigner in an Arab land. I told him he was following the footsteps of his grandfather, Fernando Amorsolo.

Aside from his *pasalubong* for everybody, he never forgot special occasions. He always sent greetings, even ordered a bouquet of flowers for me on Mother's Day.

When I had a stroke, he cared for me from day one in the hospital, carrying me about until three months later, through my therapy, I could walk with a cane and could partly use my right side. Then he built me an exercise pulley right beside my bed before he went back to Jeddah to work. Now I could use my right hand to paint again, thanks to him.

Then, on a New Year's Eve, three years ago, feeling lonely, he went with a friend to celebrate. An undisciplined, speeding Arab cab driver used their side of the street and slammed against them, hitting the passenger side, where my son was. He had multiple fractures which resulted in his death. His body was sent home 20 days later, wrapped like a mummy, in a wooden box.

I've never felt such an inconsolable grief, losing such a loving child at the peak of his artistic life.

He wanted the best for his family, even if it cost his life to assure them of it and that is what a hero is made of.

—GRACIA AMORSOLO VALDES

No lawyers good enough around

COMPAÑERO Raul J. Palabrica and Mr. Neal H. Cruz seem critical of our defense panel.

Raul says that I said that the choice of other counsel was limited to the Public Attorney's Office (PAO). What I said was it would be wrong to choose PAO lawyers who report to Justice Secretary Hernando Perez, a member of the prosecution team. In fact, I pointed out in writing that under the Rules of Court, what the Sandiganbayan ought to do, "considering the gravity of the offense and the difficulty of the questions that may arise, [is to] appoint as counsel *de oficio* such members of the bar in good standing who, by reason of their experience and ability, can competently defend the accused." Does Raul think there is anyone who on short notice will so serve thrice a week and then later five times a week as urged by the Ombudsman and favored by at least one Sandiganbayan Justice?

Cruz says there are lawyers on our panel with "a record of withdrawing from a case when they're about to lose." I doubt it, looking at the gladiators and Amazons on our team. In my case, before, during and after martial law, I have not withdrawn for the reason given by Cruz. In the Sanchez rape with homicide case, I never withdrew from a case I never handled in the first place. In the Webb case, I did handle the preliminary investigation, but when it got to court, the judge ordered hearings four days a week I withdrew in favor of superlawyer Mario Ongkiko, with his bigger firm, who was the Webbs' original choice. I am not head of what I call half in jest as the Palanan Poverty Law and Lost Causes Center for nothing. In the martial law years, after the TV cameras were gone in all those hopeless cases, who did Cruz think was left to handle them? Boy, do I love the smell of gunpowder. And the longer the odds, the better.

Again, where do these columnists get their information?

**—R. A.V. SAGUISAG,
Saguisag and Associates
Lawyers, 4045 Bigasan St.,
Palanan, Makati City**

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LETTERS

OFWs vulnerable to AIDS, other diseases

ACCORDING to the Philippine HIV/AIDS Registry, as of December 2001, 28 percent of registered People Living With HIV/AIDS (PHAs) are overseas Filipino workers (OFWs).

As migrants, the OFWs are highly vulnerable to exploitation and disease infection. But what the statistics fail to emphasize is that this vulnerability is further complicated by conditions in migration such as the availability of health and legal support and lack of information on migration realities.

The government proudly hails the OFWs as *"bagong bayani."* But if it is really proud of the OFWs, why is there a lack of effective measures for OFW health protection?

The OFWs are even made more vulnerable by the mandatory testing for HIV/AIDS. Contrary to the Philippine National AIDS Prevention and Control Act of 1998 (RA 8504), mandatory testing for HIV/AIDS is still being done in the country. The OFWs are tested before departure as a requirement for pursuing employment abroad. They are also tested from time to time by their host countries. But this prerequisite creates a false sense of security for receiving countries and stigmatizes the OFWs as disease carriers.

I would like to call on the government to act now. We want our heroes alive, not dead.

—MAD S. ABRIL, IEC program associate, Action for Health Initiatives (ACHIEVE) Inc., 58-H Kamias Rd., QC

PVB property sold for one-third of appraised value

IT is with much concern that I respond to Neal Cruz's column last Feb. 28, 2002, entitled "Citizen fights back, sues solon for graft." I would like to clear up the matter as there were very damaging statements there accusing me of wrongdoing.

This is in connection with my alleged interest in a foreclosed property in Sta. Cruz, Manila, bought by Mark Anthony A. Purisima and partner. Purisima apparently made the columnist believe that I "conspired with certain officials of the (Philippine Veterans) bank to deny him the property he bought" because I wanted to buy the property for myself. Nothing can be farther from the truth.

Purisima is the same fellow who figured in the bar exam scandal some years back that almost damaged the integrity of the bar examiners and the bar examinations. It appears he has mastered the art of deceit.

Here are the facts:

1. The property in question, a foreclosed property from Philippine Pineapple Corp., was indeed sold for P7.1 million in cash to Western Department Stores, represented by Purisima under Resolution No. 98—(B) of the board of directors of the PVB on Feb. 10, 1998. The terms and conditions state that it is being sold "as is where is," with the buyer accepting responsibility for evicting squatters, if any; and stipulate that the buyer must pay at least 10 percent of the approved price within 10 calendar days.

2. The 13 tenants of the building are not squatters, however, as alleged in the resolution, but senior citizens who have lived there for the last 30 to 40 years. As my constituents, I only wanted them to get fair compensation for the loss of their homes during their twilight years. Asking that each of them be compensated P100,000 is fair, considering that Purisima was able to get the property at a price much lower than its market value which was P21.3 million.

What Purisima did not tell Cruz was that there was fraud and manipulation in his purchase of the property. Asian Appraisal Co. in 1998 put its market value at P21,344,000. How Purisima was able to purchase it at the low price of P7.1 million indicates some underhanded manipulation. Isn't it only fair that he treat the old and soon to be homeless tenants more humanely by giving them just compensation from the savings he realized?

3. The bank resolution said payment for the sale must be made within 30 days. Purisima did not comply with this condition. Thus, my interest lies only in protecting both my constituents and the 200,000 World War II veterans who are the legitimate stockholders of the bank. If the conditions of the sale are not fair and were not complied with, the transaction would be detrimental to these stockholders.

Yes, I have tried to stop the sale—but not for the reasons Purisima cited. As a member of the House of Representatives it is my solemn duty to protect my constituents and to ensure that transactions conducted in my district are aboveboard and carried out according to law. Why should I now be persecuted for this?

Recently the PVB was reorganized to improve its operations. Some officials who were involved with Purisima resigned or were terminated. Perhaps this sheds some more light on this matter.

**—HARRY C. ANGPING,
representative, 3rd District,
Manila, 208 Northwing, House
of Representatives, Constitution Hills, Diliman,
Quezon City**

Negotiations on Agus I rehab aboveboard

THIS is in reference to Neal H. Cruz's column last Feb. 19, 2002, titled "Another overprice in Agus I plant rehab project."

First, we would like to thank him for acknowledging the bravery of our engineers, who according to him, finished the Agus I project despite threat to their lives. However, we would like to point out that he discussed the Agus I project only as an offshoot of an issue concerning the National Steel Corp. We do not want to be dragged into the controversy regarding the participation of Voest Alpine in the bidding for the National Steel Corp. So please allow us to make the following clarifications:

The Agus I hydropower plant was one of the most difficult projects undertaken by the National Power Corp. mainly because of the peace and order problems in the area. Its completion is a testament to the resolve of the Napocor to fulfill its mandate to develop energy resources and provide affordable power.

The problem was not limited to just "shootings" by armed elements. To illustrate how bad the situation was, bandits led by Commander Cobra abducted five Napocor personnel and three errand boys in 1990. They were tortured and then killed a week later.

A year before that, 12 of our personnel were abducted and released after four days. The wife of our vice president for Mindanao was also kidnapped in 1987 and released two weeks after. In 1985, armed men tried to kidnap Josef Rathgeb, Voest Alpine site manager at Agus. He escaped but was wounded and his driver was killed.

Throughout the project the Napocor and Voest Alpine had to endure six kidnapping incidents and two ambushes which led to 13 deaths.

Undoubtedly, all the parties concerned exerted all efforts to finish the project. It is true that Voest Alpine did not finish the project but it is not true that we paid it in full. We did not pay for work they did not finish.

On the subject of negotiations for the rehabilitation work on Agus I, the facility was hit by fire on Dec. 9, 1999. As a result, it now requires rehabilitation work in its control system and other equipment. Being the original equipment maker, it was only logical for us to consider Voest Alpine for the rehabilitation work.

The negotiations have been done in good faith and more importantly, has passed the scrutiny of the proper review bodies: the Napocor board and the National Economic Development Authority. The figures have been thoroughly reviewed and the process has been transparent from the start.

Also, Voest Alpine has agreed to drop all its pending claims. This has been a premise for the negotiations for the rehabilitation of Agus I.

We are confident that the proper review bodies will uphold the process we have gone through. If we may reiterate, the negotiations have been transparent, aboveboard and fair.

—ROLAND S. QUILALA, OIC-president and CEO, National Power Corp., Cor. Quezon Avenue and Agham Road, Diliman, Quezon City

Anti-littering, jaywalking discipline

THE DEPUTIZATION of some 2,000 Metro Manila Development Authority (MMDA) employees to man the operation against littering and jaywalking is laudable.

The move to strictly implement the anti-littering and anti-jaywalking law is aimed at making real the MMDA's hope to finally make a difference in the public's discipline and respect for road and cleanliness regulations in Metro Manila. However, it must guard against the fate of similar attempts in the past and not let it be another *ningas cogon* attempt.

We have to seriously implement the anti-littering campaign.

We must be revulsed by the dirt all over our cities and towns, even our own neighborhoods. There is no one to blame but ourselves.

We have to stop this and we must do this now. Even though we had a million street cleaners our surroundings will remain dirty and shameful in the eyes of the whole world if we do not correct our habit of just throwing litter anywhere thoughtlessly. We have to instill discipline among the people.

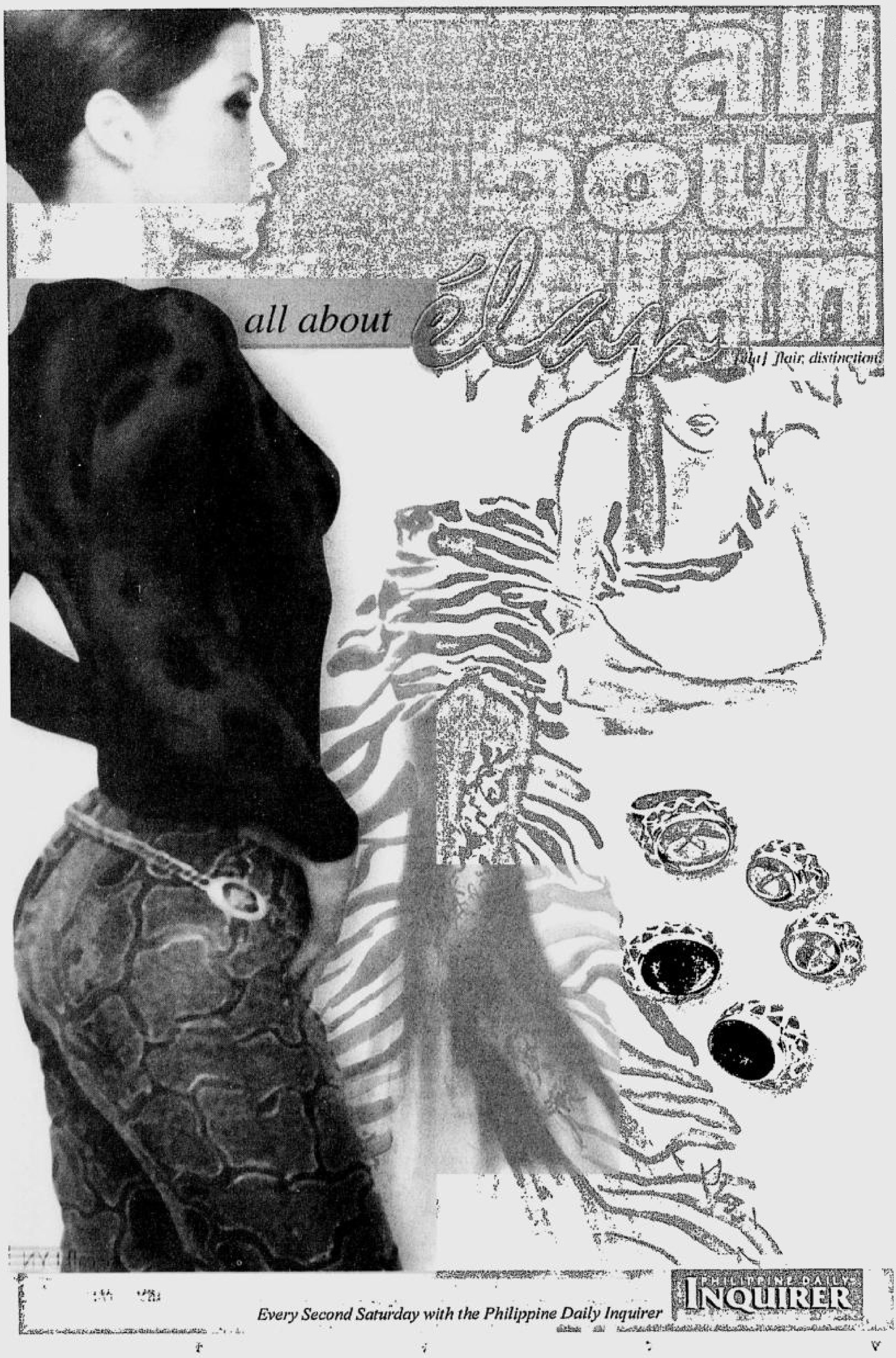
I think the proper way is the strict implementation of the anti-littering law. Assign more anti-littering enforcers to catch undisciplined citizens. Let them pay the corresponding fines, the stiffer the better so they will learn. From these fines, anti-littering enforcers should have shares. Those caught littering who can't afford to pay fines can render community service like sweeping the streets and sidewalks. There should be a place where the litterers can temporarily stay so others can see them.

The anti-littering campaign should be rigid.

Filipinos follow rules and are disciplined when in other countries. That's because the law enforcers there are really strict. Can we not do the same in the Philippines?

I suggest a national campaign on discipline and somebody to be the master of discipline.

—ELI CANTA, Blk 10 Lot 83, Dahlia St., Panapaan IV, Bacoor, Cavite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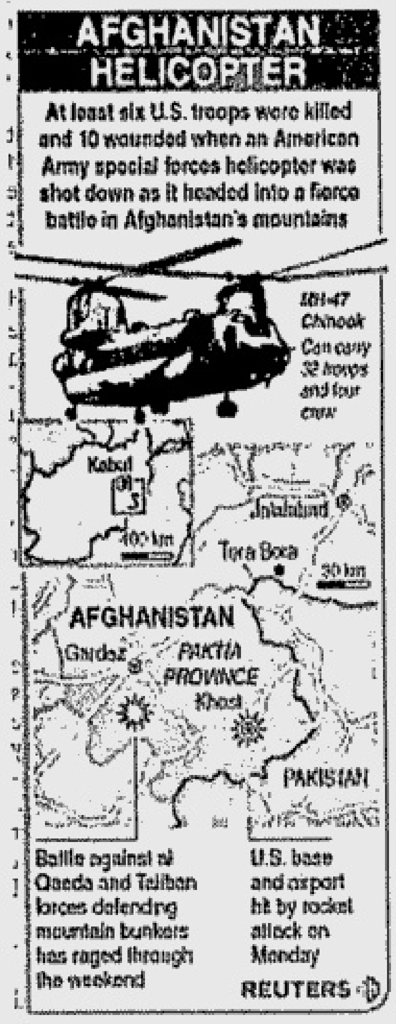
The WORLD

Editor **Luverne B. Gueco**

7 US soldiers dead; 2 choppers down



AFGHANISTAN HELICOPTER

At least six U.S. troops were killed and 10 wounded when an American Army special forces helicopter was shot down as it headed into a fierce battle in Afghanistan's mountains

MH-47 Chinook
Can carry 32 troops and four crew
Kabul
100 km
Jalalabad
Tora Bora
30 km
AFGHANISTAN
Gardez
PAKTIA PROVINCE
Khost
PAKISTAN
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REUTERS

ILLUSTRATION shows the location where a US helicopter was shot down as it carried troops to a fierce battle in mountains near Gardez. Includes illustration of the MH-47 'Chinook' helicopter which can carry as many as 32 troops.

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At least 40 US troops have been wounded since the fighting began Saturday, about half of them serious enough to require medical evacuation, they said.

About 2,000 US-led troops, including about 900 Americans and some 200 European special forces troops, were taking part in Operation Anaconda, which on Monday went into in its third day, they said.

"It seems they have chosen to stay and to fight to the last, and we hope to accommodate them," said Air Force General Richard Myers, the chair of the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

Army General Tommy Franks, the commander of the Afghan campaign, estimated that between 100 and 200 al-Qaida fighters have been killed. He said several suspected fighters have been detained.

US forces suffered their stiffest casualties of the war when US combat helicopters, operating at the limits of their capabilities at high altitudes, came under heavy fire ferrying troops in and out of battle on the mountainsides.

One soldier was killed after apparently falling out of a special forces MH-47 helicopter that was hit by a rocket propelled grenade as it was flying low to the ground, said Navy Commander Dan Keesee, a spokesperson for the US Central Command.

The helicopter, which was hit by a rocket propelled grenade, made a hard landing a half mile away and only then did its crew discover that a soldier was missing, he said.

A second MH-47 helicopter that had been flying in tandem with the first picked up the downed crew and went back to recover the missing soldier, he said.

"They land, insert some ground forces, and at that point, very shortly after that second helicopter lands, a firefight ensues," he said.

He said six soldiers were killed in the firefight. More than five others were wounded, another defense official said, speaking on condition of anonymity.

After the area was secured, a search recovered the body of the soldier from the first helicopter, officials said.

Contrary to earlier accounts by US military officials, however, he said that helicopter was not disabled by ground fire.

"There was another helicopter that was hit by an RPG (rocket propelled grenade) that effectively crashes, or hard lands," he said. There were no reports of dead or injured in that incident, which occurred after the first two incidents, he said.

Meanwhile, US air and ground forces continued their assault on a mountain stronghold where hundreds of mostly al-Qaida fighters were putting up fierce resistance.

"They're, obviously, well-organized. They're dug in. They're well-armed. And they're fighting fiercely," said Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld. "We knew they would resist strongly, and anticipated a fierce fight. That is exactly what's taking place."

US and European troops were in the center of a 60 sq. m. area leading the ground assault on al-Qaida positions, while about 1,000 Afghan forces were blocking avenues of escape, Franks said.

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Franks said US forces made no attempt to negotiate the surrender of the fighters in hopes of surprising them.

But as US-led Afghan forces moved into position on the first night of the operation they came under mortar fire that killed a US troop and several Afghans, officials said.

Rumsfeld said a number of trucks were destroyed in the mortar attack, forcing a temporary retreat.

Franks said the battle was being waged at altitudes of 2,500 to 3,3000 meters.

Enemy forces armed with rocket propelled grenades, mortars, machine guns and small arms were "in the crags of the nooks and cranny of this high ground, and our forces are right in there mixing it up with them," Franks said. *AFP*

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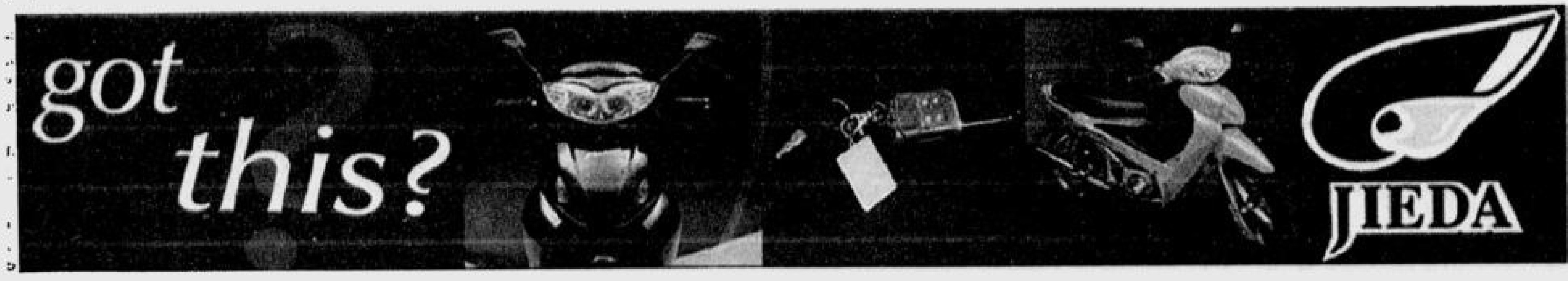

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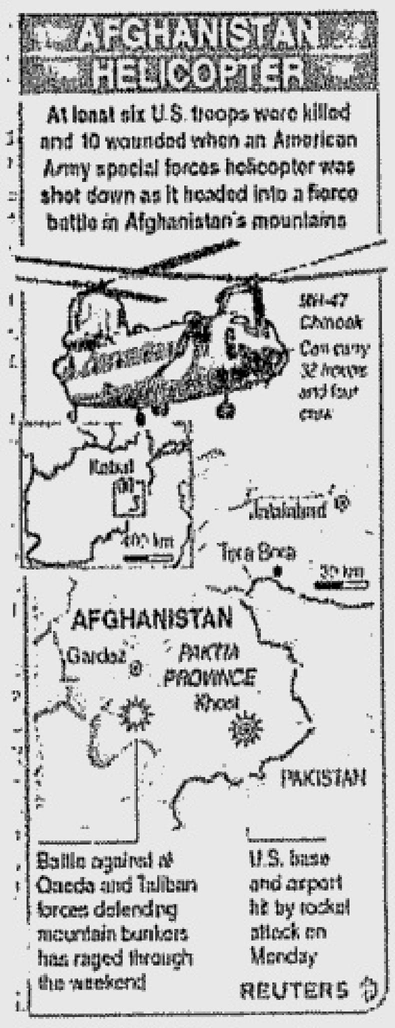
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Rumsfeld said a number of trucks were destroyed in the mortar attack, forcing a temporary retreat.

Franks said the battle was being waged at altitudes of 2,500 to 3,3000 meters.

Enemy forces armed with rocket propelled grenades, mortars, machine guns and small arms were "in the crags of the nooks and cranny of this high ground, and our forces are right in there mixing it up with them," Franks said.

AFP

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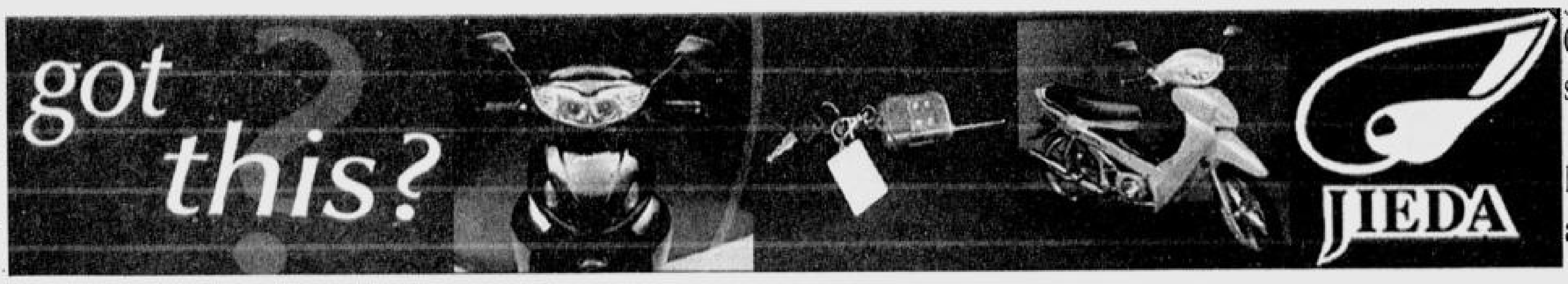

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New high in tit-for-tat Mideast violence

JERUSALEM—A Palestinian suicide bomber blew himself up on a bus, killing himself and an Israeli, in the latest of a cascade of attacks as both sides say they will continue the bloody tit-for-tat policy which leaves no hope for peace.

Five Israelis and three Palestinians were killed in four separate incidents before the day was half over, putting the toll for the past week at more than 80, as the unprecedented pace of violence and death showed no sign of letting up.

The day started with an attack in the small hours on a restaurant in Tel Aviv by a Palestinian gunman, who killed three Israelis and wounded up to 20 before being shot dead himself by police.

Then a Palestinian police officer was killed and two others wounded by the Israeli Army during an incursion into the Palestinian-controlled area of Dura near Hebron in the West Bank, Palestinian security sources said.

The officers were part of the elite Force 17 guard of Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat, the sources said.

Soon afterward a suicide bomber blew himself up on a bus in Afula, northern Israel, also killing one Israeli, police said.

At about the same time an Israeli woman settler was shot dead by Palestinians and her husband wounded as they drove in a car near the West Bank city of Bethlehem, Israeli military sources said.

The latest incidents brought the death toll for the 17-month-old Palestinian uprising to 1,365, including 1,032 Palestinians and 310 Israelis.

AFP

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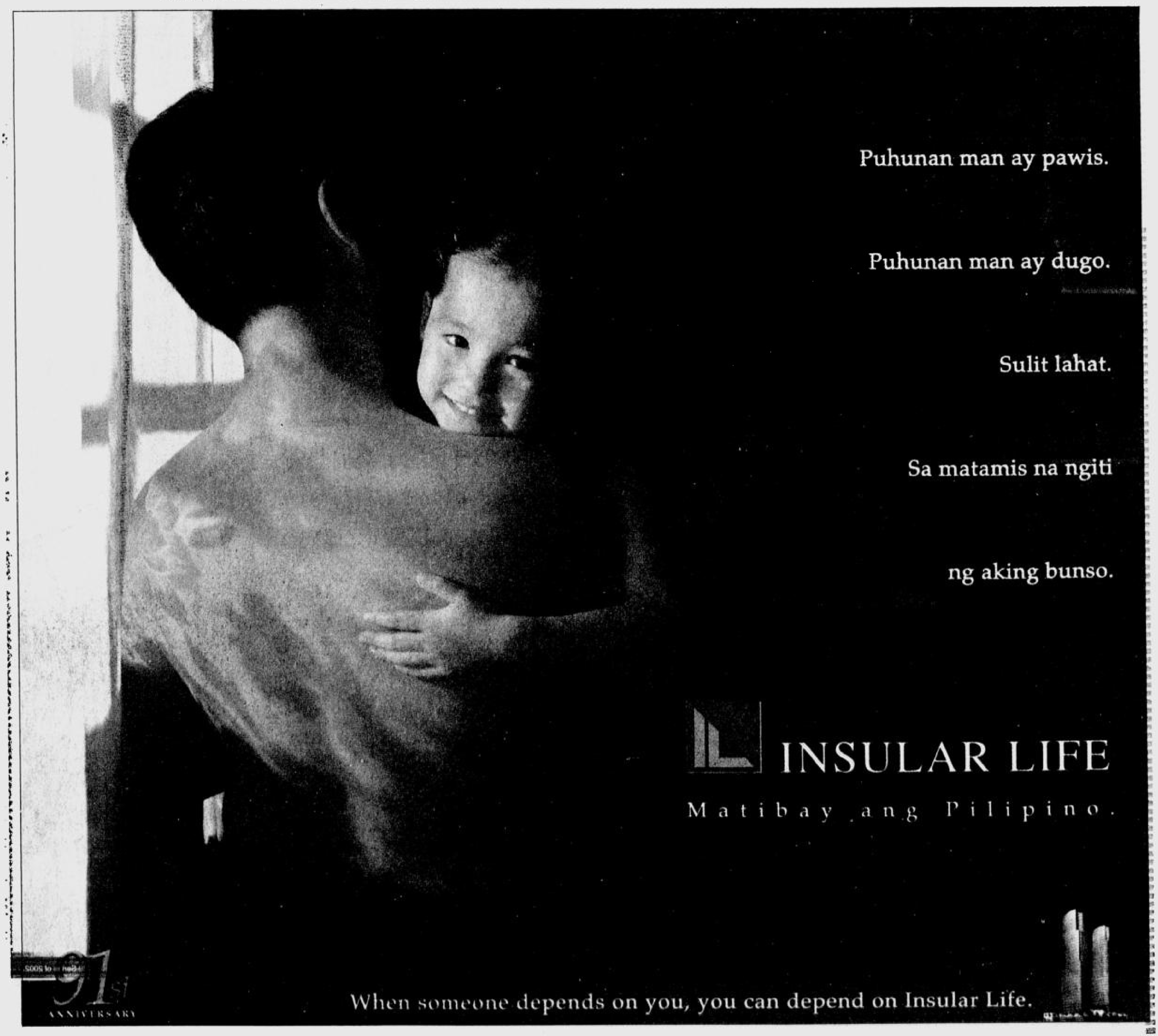

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MAHESH, a Hindu policeman from the State Reserve Police Force who was injured during recent riots between Hindus and Muslims, waits for medical treatment for his burns at the Civil hospital in Ahmedabad in India's western Gujarat state March 5.
REUTERS

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Peace returns to Gujarat as deaths hit 570

AHMEDABAD, India—Government workers dug graves Tuesday for 120 unclaimed bodies of Muslims, as peace returned to the western state of Gujarat after a weeklong Hindu-Muslim violence that claimed 570 lives.

The graves were being dug along a highway, 15 km northwest of Ahmedabad, so that unclaimed bodies in the city morgues could be given a quick burial, said a municipal official, speaking on condition of anonymity.

He said Ahmedabad municipal authorities have set a Tuesday deadline for family members to claim the bodies.

The ones that still haven't been claimed will be buried Wednesday. Municipal authorities have asked Muslim leaders for assistance in carrying out the religious rites, he said.

In Ahmedabad, the state's principal city and the worst hit in the riots, "the situation appears to be normal," police spokesperson Inspector Pradeep Bhatt said. "Ahmedabad has been peaceful." he said.

For the first time, the rest of the state also was peaceful, but tense, other police officials said.

Social workers and nongovernment organizations were planning a peace march later Tuesday in Ahmedabad, a city of 3.5 million people of whom 1 million are Muslims.

The rioting was India's worst religious violence in a decade. It started after a Muslim mob set fire to a train carrying Hindu nationalists on Wednesday. The 58 deaths provoked a retaliatory rampage by Hindus. Most of those killed since then have been Muslims.

On Monday, two people were killed when police fired guns at a crowd of looters in Santarampur town and one person was stabbed to death in Surat town, police said.

With more charred bodies being pulled out of burned homes, the death toll in the rioting after the train massacre is 512, the state police control room said. About 86 of the deaths occurred in police firing statewide. ***AP***

WORLDBRIEFS

Second spacewalk

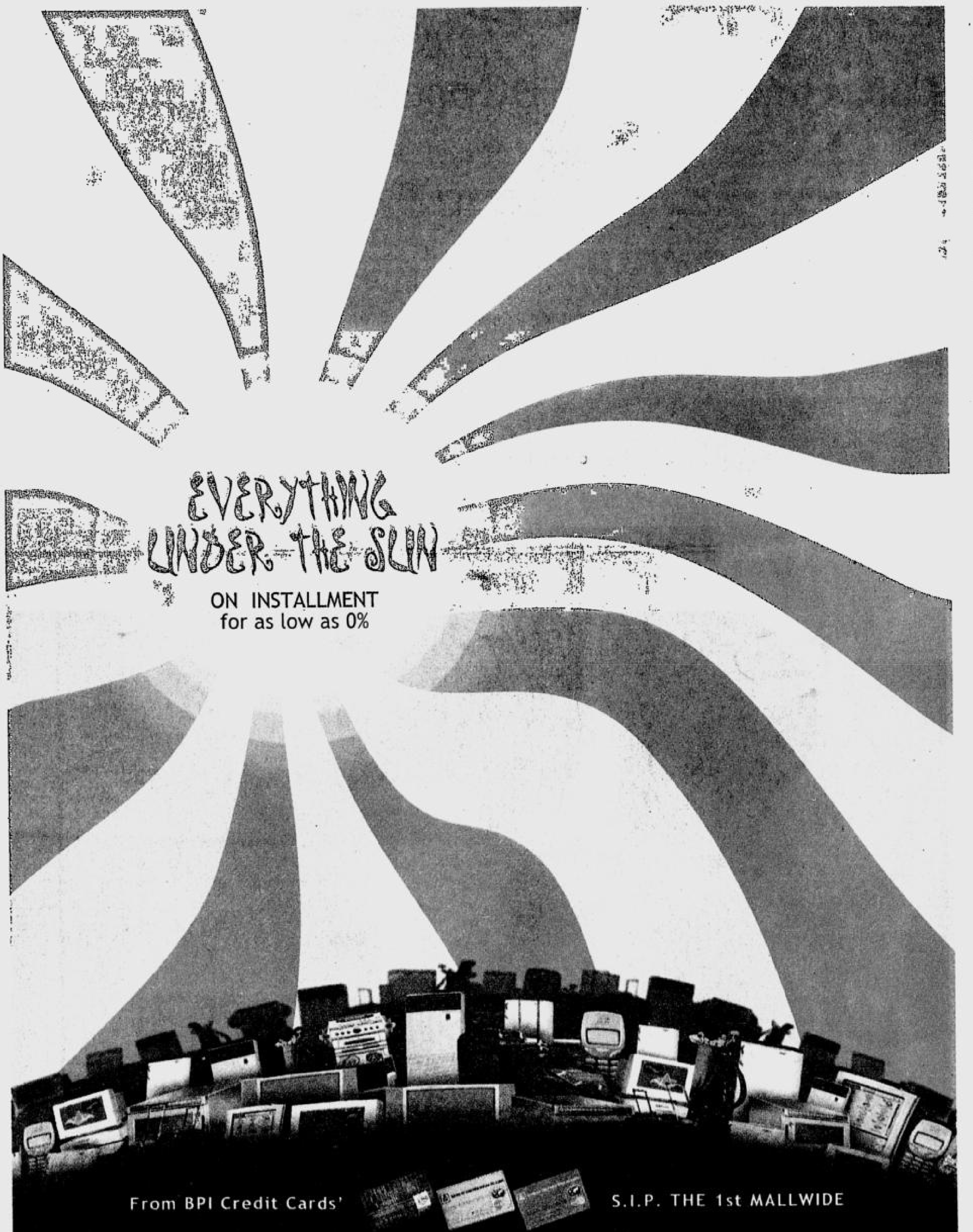
HOUSTON, Texas—Two US astronauts stepped outside the shuttle Columbia early Tuesday to begin installing new solar panels on the orbiting Hubble Space telescope, Nasa's mission control here said. The second in a series of five spacewalks to refurbish the telescope began at 0:40 a.m. (2:40 p.m. in Manila) as the Columbia drifted over north Africa. It should last about seven hours, said National Aeronautics and Space Administration spokesperson Rob Navias. Astronauts Jim Newman and Mike Massimino were floating around the Hubble to replace the telescope's second flexible solar panel with a smaller, more powerful photovoltaic generator. ***AFP***

Mobster tenant

TOKYO—Japan's home affairs minister, Toranosuke Katayama, has been renting a house to a prominent gangster who was arrested last month on extortion charges, an aide said Tuesday. Katayama was unaware his tenant for the past two years, Yasuyuki Inami, was an executive in a local branch of Japan's biggest crime syndicate, the Yamaguchi-gumi, said Hiromu Nakatsuki, an official in the politician's office in Okayama City, about 547 km west of Tokyo. "The real estate agent handled the entire transaction," Nakatsuki said. "Katayama is in no way acquainted with the suspect." Inami was arrested in February, a few weeks after he forced his way into a state-linked corporation in charge of public works and allegedly demanded that the company award a project to a subcontactor linked to him, said a local police official. ***AP***

Bonds for savings

BUENOS AIRES—Argentines will get long-term bonds in exchange for their bank savings, it was announced Monday, as heart surgeons, teachers and the dairy industry hit out at government handling of the dire crisis. While the sudden announcement of new fiscal and economic measures came generally as a surprise, Argentines with money in the bank had been fearful since the freezing of their accounts in December the government would at some stage take their assets. Economy Minister Jorge Remes Lenicov told a press conference, however, that the measures would "improve the performance of the economy, give fiscal solvency, strengthen social programs and help companies recover so as to launch a new (economic) cycle." ***AFP***



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Olot ruling pleases Imelda

**By Vicente S. Labro
and Joey A. Gabieta**
PDI Visayas Bureau

TACLOBAN CITY—Former first lady Imelda Marcos is ecstatic that a multimillion-peso property in Tolosa, Leyte will be finally returned to her family.

"Ma'am (Imelda) was very happy about it. Justice was (finally given) to her and to the (Romualdez) family," according to her younger brother, Mayor Alfredo "Bejo" Romualdez.

But Romualdez said her sister could not immediately return to their estate in Barangay Olot, Tolosa, about 25 kilometers southwest of here, because she is sick.

Mrs. Marcos, 72, has been confined at the Makati Medical Center "for days now," said the mayor. He declined to divulge his sister's illness.

The Sandiganbayan has ordered the Presidential Commission on Good Government to return the Olot property to the Romualdezes by the end of this month.

The property, which was famous during the Marcos regime as a place frequented by the rich and the famous, is being claimed by the Romualdez clan as its ancestral land.

But the estate has lost its grandeur because it has not been properly maintained since it was sequestered in 1986.

Many of the buildings are now dilapidated although the mansions and the amphitheater appear to be still in good shape. The condition of the place is a far cry from when Mrs. Marcos was still the first lady.

Romualdez said his sister planned to open the estate to the public. "That is really her intention, to open it to the public. The place is really for everybody . . . for public use," he said.

He, however, added that he had no idea when his sister would finally visit the property. "The last time I visited was sometime last year," he added.

Mrs. Marcos visited the Olot property twice last year. In May, she came to personally campaign for her brother and two nephews during the elections.

Romualdez won in his reelection bid but his two sons were not as lucky. Alfred Romualdez failed to keep his congressional seat in the first district, losing to broadcaster Ted Failon.

Carlos Romualdez ran for congressman in the second district but lost to Rep. Trinidad Apostol, former vice governor.

On June 30, Mrs. Marcos visited Olot anew during the city fiesta. But in July, she and other family members were barred from entering the property without prior approval from the PCGG. The agency was then conducting an inventory in all sequestered properties in Leyte, including the Sto. Niño Shrine and the People's Center and Library.

The PCGG has leased out the properties to pay for employees' salaries and for the maintenance of the Olot estate and other Romualdez-owned sequestered properties.

Portions of the 45-hectare Olot property was also rented out. These included a nine-hole golf course, which is open to members of the San Juanico Golf Club, and the swimming pool, bath house and the beach front—now collectively known as the Olot Beach Resort—which is open to the public.

Capas mayor stops CDC operations at landfill site

CAPAS, Tarlac—Mayor Reynaldo Catacutan on Monday ordered personnel of the Clark Development Corp. to stop land clearing operations for the controversial sanitary landfill project in Sitio Kalangitan here.

Earlier that day, Catacutan convened the municipal crisis committee and told its members that the CDC, proponent of the $100-million waste management project, violated a verbal agreement that construction would not start until additional public hearings had been held and social acceptability issues settled.

The mayor said the agreement was made in the presence of President Macapagal-Arroyo on Feb. 14.

Catacutan told committee members that the CDC "stealthily transported" heavy equipment to the project site at dawn Sunday using the "backdoor route" through the Dapdap resettlement site in nearby Bamban town.

He said that by using the Bamban route, the CDC evaded the monitoring stations he ordered set up in Capas to block the entry of CDC equipment.

There was a brief moment of tension at the entrance of the project site when armed CDC policemen manning the checkpoint stopped Catacutan, his aides and several reporters from entering the site.

But Catacutan negotiated with CDC police officer Napoleon Rodriguez to allow him and his companions entry.

At the site, Pepito Galang, CDC manager for special projects, called Catacutan on his mobile phone to say the CDC was "surprised" and had no knowledge of the arrival of heavy equipment and of the land clearing operation.

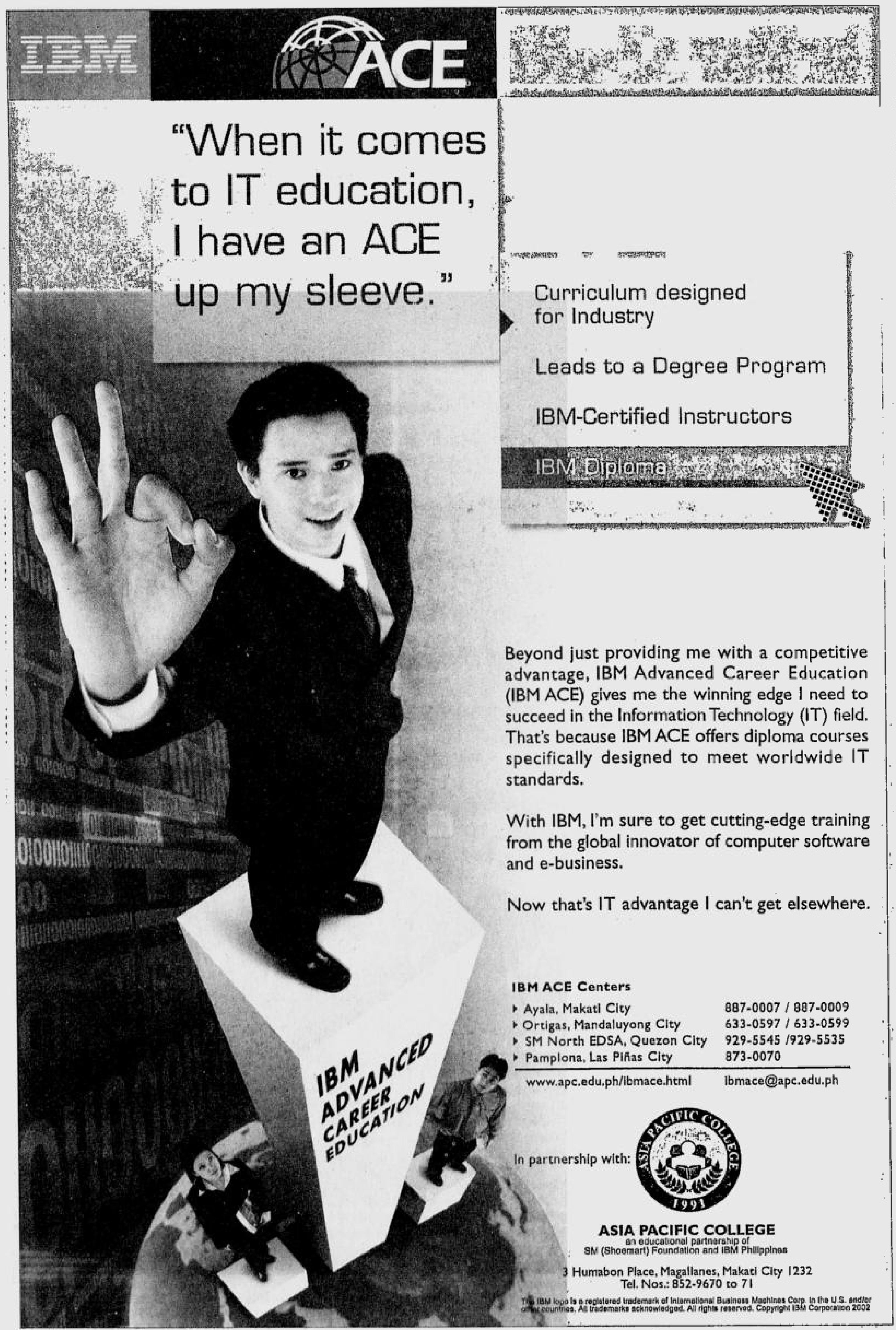
A meeting was set between Catacutan and CDC president Emmanuel Angeles to discuss the matter.

Catacutan asked the CDC personnel to stop the clearing operations. He said he would gather Capas residents to form human barricades to block all entry points to Kalangitan if CDC DOES not stop construction activities.

The CDC awarded the contract to build the sanitary landfill project to the German contractor Ingenieurburo Birkhahn + Nolte (IBN) in 1999. The project covers 100 hectares of land, 70 hectares of which will be used as actual landfill site.

About 30 hectares of the site were allocated for recycling, environmental buffer zone and other facilities. Construction of the initial three-hectare landfill area is scheduled to start in April and will cost some P186 million.

But the project has been hounded by protests and controversies since it started. Anti-landfill rallies have been held since 1999. ***Abner Bolos, PDI Central Luzon Desk***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'Lumads' storm radio station

BUTUAN CITY—Around 500 members of a tribal group yesterday barricaded the front gate of the Bombo Radyo station here and demanded the resignation of its manager for allegedly being unfairly critical of Mayor Daisy Plaza.

Datu Pahimutang Nonoy Vidal, a Manobo chieftain and vice president of the Kahugpungan sa mga Tribong Lumad sa Caraga (Katrilcar), said the *lumads* were hurt by the criticisms against Plaza, the wife of one of their *datus*.

"We will only cease from (holding) our rally after (station manager Norbert) Pagaspas resign and flee Caraga Region," he vowed.

Pagaspas, however, said the rally violated a temporary restraining order issued by a local court.

The order, he said, also prescribed that the city government or any of its agents to stop disturbing Bombo Radyo's operation, building, structure and broadcasting facility.

"What they are doing is disturbing the operation, we could not really go in and out," he said.

He urged authorities to disperse the crowd, but Vidal said they had a permit to stage the rally.

Pagaspas said the rally was clearly meant to harass them.

He said the management of Bombo Radyo would file charges against Plaza.

The company has been locked in a controversy with the mayor, who filed a P20-million libel suit against three of its personnel. ***Ma. Kristina Cassion, PDI Mindanao Bureau***

WEATHER FORECAST

FORECAST: Bicol region and eastern Visayas will have rains and occasional gusty winds. The rest of Eastern Luzon and Western Visayas will experience cloudy skies with scattered rainshowers and isolated thunderstorms.

SOURCE: PAGASA

Metro Manila	Partly Cloudy	HI32° Lo 22°
Baguio	Partly Cloudy	HI 23° Lo 12°
Tuguegarao	Partly Cloudy	HI 30° Lo 19°
Laoag	Partly Cloudy	HI 31° Lo 19°
Clark Zone	Partly Cloudy	HI 32° Lo 20°
Tagaytay	Partly Cloudy	HI 31° Lo 18°
Legazpi	Rains and Gusty Winds	HI 27° Lo 22°
Calapan	Partly Cloudy	HI 29° Lo 20°
Iloilo/Bacolod	Partly Cloudy	HI 30° Lo 23°
Roxas	Partly Cloudy	HI 30° Lo 24°
Cebu	Partly Cloudy	HI 31° Lo 23°
Tacloban	Cloudy with Rains	HI 28° Lo 23°
Gen. Santos	Partly Cloudy	HI 32° Lo 23°
Zamboanga	Partly Cloudy	HI 32° Lo 23°
Cagayan de Oro	Partly Cloudy	HI 31° Lo 23°
Davao	Partly Cloudy	HI 32° Lo 24°

Compiled by: Ray Leyesa, PDI Research/03/06/02

ROUNDUP

Furniture firm robbed

CEBU CITY—Six armed robbers on Friday took the payroll money of an export firm in Mandaue City. Police said the robbers, who were riding on two motorcycles, blocked the Isuzu Elf truck of Judah Reproduction, a rattan furniture company, at about 5 p.m. along A.S. Fortuna Street, pointed their guns at the driver and took P274,000 from the paymaster. The cash was intended for last week's salary of 500 company workers.

Jhunnex Napallacan, PDI Visayas Bureau

Jailbreaker gives up

TAGBILARAN CITY—One of six inmates, who escape from jail in Carmen town, surrendered on Thursday, a day after another jailbreaker was captured. Greggy Rebuyon, 22, gave himself up to Carmen Councilor Valeriano Nadala. Earlier, Jaime Hinampas, 29, was cornered by jail personnel in Barangay Buenavista, Carmen. Still at large are Thomas Llanto, 31; Tito Calamba, 28; and Felix Sitoy, 44; and a 17-year-old detainee.

Chito Fuentes, PDI Visayas Bureau

Bar owner nabbed

CEBU CITY—The owner of a popular girlie bar here was arrested on Sunday night for alleged possession of illegal drugs. Police arrested Manuel Gochoco Go, 51, owner of Manny's Bikini Bars, inside the Tiu Apartment on Sanciangko Street. They said Go tried to elude arrest and threw his wallet out of the window of the apartment. Bystanders found the wallet, which contained 3.99 grams of shabu (*methamphetamine hydrocloride*), and turned it over to the lawmen. Go, who was released yesterday after posting a P10,000 bail, told reporters he did not own the drug.

Jhunnex Napallacan, PDI Visayas Bureau

Life term for killer

BACOLOD CITY—A regional trial court here on Monday sentenced a jobless man to life imprisonment for killing, for no apparent reason a cargo truck driver who was standing on the roadside. Court records showed that Reggie Parcon Peñas, 26, who was on board a tricycle, shot and killed Jose Peter Palomar in front of the MGB Sing Along Karaoke Bar along the Circumferential Road at about 3 a.m. of Feb. 12.

Carla Gomez, PDI Visayas Bureau

12 schools get computers

SORSOGON CITY—The Department of Trade and Industry has distributed 240 computers to 12 public high schools in Sorsogon under its Personal Computers for Public Schools Project. Trade provincial director Leah Pagao said the project aims to raise the computer literacy level of public school teachers and students by providing them with computer hardware and integrating computer education into the high school curriculum.

PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

2 robbers killed

DASMARIÑAS, Cavite—Two suspected robbers were killed while a bus driver and a policeman were wounded during an alleged shootout here recently. Police identified one of those killed as Jess Riel-Piel, of Merville Subdivision in Sucat, Parañaque City. A third suspect, Joel Carlos, also of Merville, was arrested shortly before the incident. Police said they had urged the suspects to surrender but were forced to fire back after the suspects shot and lobbed a grenade at them. The suspects held up passengers of a San Agustin Bus Lines unit along the Aguinaldo Highway.

Romulo Ponte, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

Pregnant woman killed

BATANGAS CITY—A woman who was seven months pregnant died on arrival at the Batangas Regional Hospital after a neighbor allegedly stabbed her 25 times at her home at the relocation site of Barangay Balete here on Friday. Police said the victim, Elizabeth Inate de Castillo, 28, died from multiple stab wounds in different parts of the body. The suspect, Jimmy Bermudez, 27, claimed he did not intend to kill Castillo.

Mel Magsino, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

Training in Korea

FIFTEEN provincial employees of Leyte will undergo training on production and marketing of farm products in Seoul under the auspices of South Korea's International Cooperation Organization, according to a press statement. After their training, the employees will be tasked with organizing an integration distribution and marketing center for farm products in Leyte to enable farmers and fishermen to send their produce to the market without going through middlemen.

SC fires Isabela judge

SANTIAGO CITY—The Supreme Court has dismissed a Regional Trial Court judge here for his failure to pay his debts, gross misconduct and violation of judicial ethics.

In a seven-page *en banc* decision on Feb. 26, a copy of which was obtained by the INQUIRER, the tribunal also disqualified Judge Demetrio Calimag Jr. of the RTC Branch 35 from assuming public office, including posts in government-owned or controlled- corporations.

The order stemmed from an administrative case filed in 1996 by businesswoman Purita Lim, owner of a lumber and hardware store here.

Calimag, 49, a former municipal trial court judge, was ordered to pay all his indebtedness to Lim.

Since Monday, the INQUIRER tried but failed to reach Calimag for comment. Members of his staff, however, said he had not reported for work.

Documents showed that since 1996, the judge owed Lim P31,797 in building construction materials and P30,000 in cash.

Until today, the court said, Calimag has not fully settled his debts with Lim.

"We do not hesitate to rule that respondent (Calimag) deliberately and willfully failed to pay a just and lawful debt in favor of complainant (Lim)," the Supreme Court said. ***Villamor Visaya Jr. and Melvin Gascon, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau***

American in rape rap seeks bail

BACOLOD CITY—A retired US serviceman who is facing 62 counts of rape is asking the regional trial court in Kabankalan City, 97 kilometers south of here, to allow him to post bail.

Through his lawyer Romeo Flora, Victor Pearson filed the urgent motion, saying the prosecution has failed to prove that the evidence of guilt against him was strong.

Private prosecutor Rowena Guanzon said an opposition to the motion would be filed, citing strong evidence against the accused.

"I am surprised that his lawyers, this late in the day, are filing a motion for bail and I am confident that the judge will deny it," he said.

Pearson is a former US Marine and a veteran of the Vietnam War. He is now detained at the provincial jail in Bacolod pending trial of the rape charges filed against him by five young girls between August last year until last February.

The complainants used to be housemaids of the American in the house he maintained in Ilog town, Negros Occidental. ***Carla Gomez, PDI Visayas Bureau***

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INQUIRER Northern Luzon
Editor Jun Bandayrel ◆ Bureau Chief Rolando B. Fernandez

Condom use in Angeles no easy fit

By Tonette Orejas
Angeles City

IN THE LAST six years of operations of the Clark Air Base, Angeles City and its red light district, Fields Avenue, grappled with the scourge of Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS).

With 22 cases of Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) from 1985 to 1993, the United States Naval Medical Research Unit II continued to make the city a sentinel site for AIDS surveillance, even two years after American soldiers had pulled out in 1991. In 1999, the city government and non-government organizations, backed by the United States Agency for International Development, prepared for an ambitious task: enforce a 100-percent condom use policy.

By August 2000, just when the Visiting Forces Agreement war games became more regular and US troops became constant clients again at Fields, the AIDS prevention ordinance (Ordinance No. 106), with absolute condom use as one of its five strategies, was signed.

"MAHIRAP (It's difficult)," said Melinda of her efforts at convincing her male customers to wear condoms.

"You insist, they get other women," she said while forcing herself to be awake in a queue for the weekly smear test at Angeles City's reproductive health and wellness center (formerly social hygiene clinic) last Friday.

Sleepless and tired from 10 hours of work—dancing intermittently for four hours, entertaining male clients and drinking to earn commissions—the 21-year-old lass barely had the energy to take the mandatory test.

The burden, she said, is always on her and other women who the center, in its reports, calls "commercial sex workers." Finding that demeaning, she smirked at the label.

"It's always us who always have to be safe (as in not afflicted with AIDS, HIV or sexually transmitted diseases). But when we protect ourselves by making our partners use condoms, we are in a dilemma. Will we have sex without condoms or will we let go of the chance to earn? It's always a question of survival. Can we be choosy?" she said.

Always after the chance to earn, she said in her case, it was often having sex without the "rubber," with either Filipinos or foreigners. "I leave it all to prayers," she added.

Until noon, more than 50 women took the test. Not one man was seen availing of health examinations at the center that day.

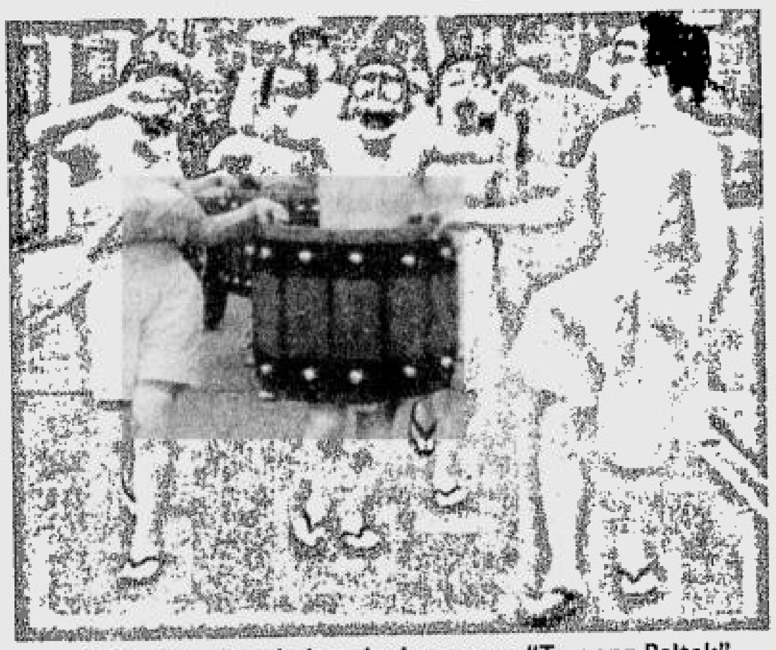
Melinda's remarks and the scenes on Friday at the RHWC gave a window to the city's campaign against AIDS.

Where there is a lack of resources to discover or even buy vaccines, the story of AIDS in the city has been one of total reliance on a campaign promoting preventive measures, according to Dr. Teresita Esguerra, chief of the Angeles City AIDS council.

Two new HIV cases were confirmed last year, raising to 27 the total number of cases since 1994.

The city also has a "high prevalence" of STDs. According to Esguerra, 10 percent of the 600 people examined last year were infected with syphilis.

"We cannot afford not to (enforce preventive measures)," she said.


MEMBERS of the Baguio-based mime group "Tropang Paltok" help drum up awareness on condom use during the "condom" run in Bagiuo City last month. EV ESPIRITU

Although hailed as a "turning point" by the USAID-funded primer, the campaign, resting on the strength of Ordinance No. 106, which promulgates policies and measures for the prevention and control of HIV/AIDS/STD, has really been through tough trials in almost two years.

Slide

The condom campaign, for instance, has failed to reach the target. Basically a contraceptive for family planning, the device is promoted to prevent the transmission of the deadly virus and to protect public health.

"Condom use is below 50 percent (among male customers)," Esguerra noted, citing the results of a behavioral study done between 1994 and 2001.

The "always-use-condom policy" among registered female sex workers followed an up-and-down trend below 40 percent, eventually climbing to 55 percent between 1999 and 2000. Then, it sharply fell by 10 percent last year when the ordinance was in full effect.

On the other hand, clients of "freelancers" rarely used condoms. The trend of use consistently remained between 10 and 20 percent.

This below-50-percent-use rate, according to Esguerra, could be disappointing if all the work exerted into the campaign were considered.

According to her, the rate did not match the efforts at making condoms 100 percent available in all entertainment establishments.

Condoms are distributed by the League of Angeles City Entertainers and Managers (Lacem) for the private company DKT and the council. The supplies are accessible in *sari-sari* and drug stores, groceries and even from cigarette vendors and NGO offices. These are sold for P5 per pack of three.

Condoms are also available from peer educators that the ordinance required each establishment to have.

The rate was incongruent to the "increased knowledge of women on AIDS," which, Esguerra said, was the result of compulsory AIDS/STD education, the principal policy of the campaign.

Esguerra knew where the new gap lies. "It's difficult because it is hard to change the behavior of men. Men are the ones resisting the condom. The women have high regard for it."

Offering a viable solution, she sees the need for an "education program also for customers so AIDS prevention can be two-way."

But Dexter Garcia, advocacy officer of the Pearl S. Buck International (PSBI), said condom use in Angeles could be more dismal than how the council assessed it to be.

His group monitors for the USAID the compliance of the rest and recreation industry to the ordinance. His group is also undertaking its own AIDS surveillance and education project.

Worse on streets

The council centered its monitoring on registered women in licensed nightclubs, saunas, videoke bars, Internet cafés, hotels, motels, discos and barbecue joints.

"Out there on the streets are more freelancers and young hookers, and they are not easy to regulate," said Garcia.

On the average, the PSBI's behavioral monitoring survey done last year showed that condom use reached only an average of about 40 percent among unregistered workers.

Of 122 "freelance female sex workers," only 34 percent used condom in their most recent sexual intercourse.

Of at least 99 "men in red light districts," only 38 percent used condom.

Of 110 "young females at high-risk" or minors hooking on the streets, 50 percent of whom were below 17 years old, 43 percent used condom.

While condom use was low, the danger was high. According to the same survey, many in the three groups, especially the men, had "risky" partners (multiple lovers or their last partners were commercial sex workers).

Angeles ranked second after Zamboanga City in terms of low condom use. The rate was high in General Santos and Cebu cities.

Garcia said that while the city government made strides in banning companies from hiring minors, there really were urgent needs for immediate economic alternatives to keep them out of the trade.

The survey also confirmed what Esguerra deemed important to do: Focus also on the men—whether workers or clients.

But there are gaps to fill for the campaign to succeed, Garcia and Esguerra said in separate interviews.

Among these are the poor information drive, the dilemma women face (condom use against earnings), the apparent resistance of the Catholic Church to the campaign, the light penalties imposed by the ordinance, and insufficient funds.

"We are not trying to imply that sex is available here because condom is available and it must be used. We are not saying also that we allow prostitution here. We just want to be sure about public health, that's our general interest," Esguerra said.

Manila-based artists paint for ailing heart babies

By Gobleth Moulic
Baguio City

WHO would have thought that 24 Manila-based artists, with their erratic schedules and a litany of commitments, would gather together for the first time in Baguio City to paint for a cause?

"Well, the children pulled us together," the artists said the moment they arrived on Saturday at the city's Botanical Garden for the activity.

Their answer was enough to elicit warm smiles from the parents of children suffering from various congenital heart diseases who came to Baguio to interact with the artists.

No one from the Children's Heart Foundation (CHF), the event's organizer, expected that several artists, who have carved their own niches in the Philippine art circle, would respond favorably to the call of helping children with congenital heart diseases.

When the CHF officials were brainstorming on how to raise funds for their beneficiaries, one of them came up with the idea of asking artists to donate their pieces to the foundation.

But when they approached noted watercolorist Rafael "Popoy" Cusi to solicit his help, he dismissed the idea and suggested something else.

"That sounds good but you can't be sure about the quality of paintings that the artists will donate. What if I only give you an artwork the size of a coupon bond? Why don't you think of a project where both the artists and the foundation will benefit?" Cusi told the CHF officials.

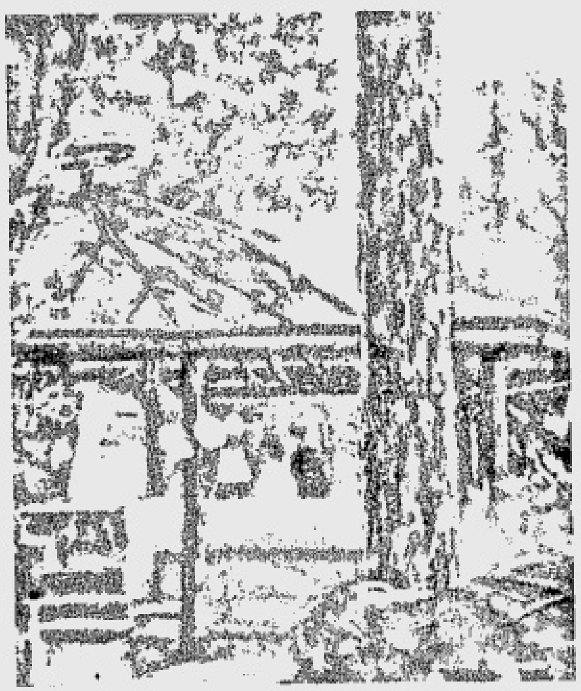
Thus, the CHF officers met again until they decided to sponsor an on-the-spot painting in the country's summer capital. The CHF said this was the best avenue where artists could share their talent with the heart babies by giving some of their masterpieces to the foundation.

The CHF officials earlier said they would be happy if 10 artists would participate in the worthy cause. After all, the participants would waive their fees to raise funds for children from poor families who need heart surgeries.

But on Friday, the CHF officials were surprised when 24 artists from Metro Manila showed up and boarded a Baguio-bound coaster provided by Victory Liner.

They were Cusi, Gene de Loyola, Robert Balajadia, Ding Hidalgo, Jose Madrilejos, Jimbo Velasquez, Danilo Santiago, Roland Rosacay, Noli Española, Romeo Rosete, Tess Dequiña, Noel Catacutan, Abe Lucas, Paul Dimalanta, Pol Mesina, Andy Urag, Bing Siochi, Kathy Reyes, Joey Valerio, Jeff Carnay, Racquel de Loyola, Maan Charisse de Loyola, Rafael Concepcion Jr. and Jus Tolentino.

NOTED watercolorist Rafael "Popoy" Cusi leads Metro Manila-based artists during the on-the-spot painting activity in Baguio to raise funds for children with congenital heart diseases. EV ESPIRITU


A RENDITION of the Baguio Botanical Garden by Antipolo-based artist Pol Mesina. TOOTS SOBERANO

Word spread around and Baguio Arts Guild members Desiree Caluza (also an INQUIRER correspondent) and Ella Pinder joined the Manila-based artists in the whole day activity. The BAG officials led by president Sonny Balanga and Santiago Bose were there to interact with the CHF officials and the visiting artists.

With the spacious Botanical Garden as backdrop, the artists unpacked their brushes and materials and began to paint at 9 a.m.

The event captured the curiosity of local tourists like Martin Napalon, a *balikbayan* from Mangaldan, Pangasinan, who gave P1,000 cash to the CHF. She said that she, too, has a heart ailment and found the project an opportunity to help heart babies.

Napalon's generosity was welcomed by city officials like Rep. Mauricio Domogan, Vice Mayor Betty Lourdes Tabanda, Councilor Richard Cariño and city administrator Virgilio Bautista who dropped by to give moral support to the CHF.

Before they left on Sunday, the 26 artists who participated in the activity finished more than 60 artworks of various sizes. Forty-four of these were donated to the CHF, including three interaction paintings.

De Loyola, who brought along his two daughters, made a portrait of "heart baby" Mitzi Sicay. De Loyola donated to the foundation his 16-inch by 20-inch acrylic painting of the Mines' View Park. The painting is priced at P40,000.

Catacutan said "artists are always ready to help." He offered his impressionistic landscape in oil. Urag finished his soft pastel on Baguio's landscape worth P10,000.

Left-handed Española captured the city's lush greenery on canvas and gave his four artworks to the foundation.

Mesina, Santiago, Balajadia, Lucas, Valerio, Dimalanta, Hidalgo, Rosete, Rosacay, Madrilejos, Velasquez, Siochi, Dequiña, Tolentino, Concepcion, De Loyolas, Carnay, Reyes, Caluza and Pinder, who did their respective interpretations of Baguio's landscape, said they were "fulfilled and happy" sharing their God-given gift with others.

In April, the CHF will exhibit the 44 artworks during its grand launching and fund-raising drive in Manila. Asked if other artists would follow their example, Cusi said: "Nobody wins in this ballgame but the children."

Those interested to buy paintings or give donations to the CHF may call CHF Executive Director Claro Gaña at (02) 632-9650.

Diversity common theme in 'Panagbenga' landscape tilt

By Maurice Malanes
Baguio City

ONE word can sum up what nature at its best can offer--diversity. The more diverse her flora and fauna, the better for Mother Nature, and the better for us earthlings, too.

Why? In bio-diversity (the diversity and integrity of all life forms), the vital support systems we need for survival, such as the air we breathe, the food and medicines we take, and the water we drink, are well provided for.

It is thus not surprising if diversity pervades the winning entries during the recent Baguio Flower Festival's landscape competition at Camp John Hay.

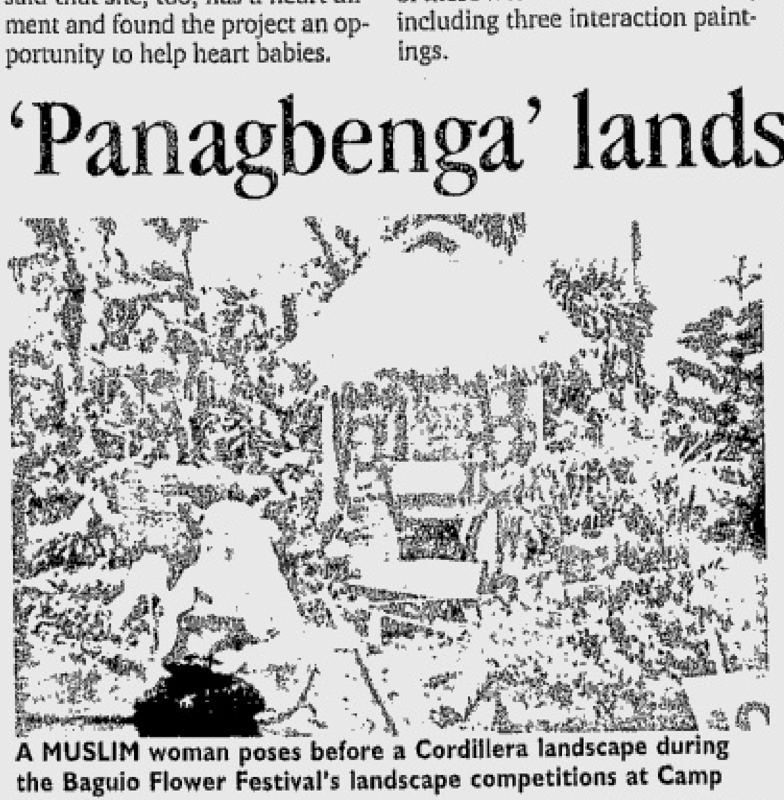
Sponsored mainly by the Camp John Hay Development Corp. and the John Hay Poro Point Development Corp., the landscape competition has been a regular feature of the yearly flower festival or Panagbenga, which continues to draw hordes of tourists to Baguio.

The first prize in the Cordillera landscape category, for example, features a type of ecosystem where trees, shrubs, ferns, orchids, anthuriums, grass, a wide array of mums and daisies, water lilies and other plant species were interwoven to replicate what nature can offer at its best in an upland setting.

At the heart of the whole landscape is a replica of a mountain spring with ever-flowing water, a vital element of life in the Cordillera, or elsewhere in this drought-prone country.

The same landscape features two Igorot huts linked together by a hanging bridge, terraces and two ponds teeming with water lilies. The bridge must be symbolic of the need to build bridges rather than walls because the Cordillera after all is not an insulated region.

The lowland areas, for instance, have an umbilical cord to the Cordillera—the rivers, which trace their headwaters to the upland region and sustain agriculture in the valleys and plains.


A MUSLIM woman poses before a Cordillera landscape during the Baguio Flower Festival's landscape competitions at Camp John Hay. MAURICE MALANES

The art of terracing the landscape artist incorporated into his winning entry must also be a tribute to the engineering ingenuity of the Igorots who built the famed rice terraces.

Terracing has been the Igorots' way of taming the rough and hard terrain of the upland region ever since they discovered how to cultivate their most precious glutinous rice, which has survived up to now.

Diversity also remains the secret of the first prize entry in the open landscape category. The wide variety of anthuriums, orchids, lilies, trees and other plants surrounding a wishing well, apart from the magical mix of the varied colors of flowers and leaves, must have impressed the judges.

Tears, pleas don't sway us, says SC

From page A1

The senator said that if Estrada intended "to follow the footsteps of the revered Gandhi and Ninoy," he "better be prepared" to embark on self-denial for a just cause.

"Is Erap prepared to go to the brink, to the limit, to espouse a cause that is truly for the people, not one that is personal to him, like his petition to be allowed a medical trip abroad?" Arroyo added.

The Partido ng Masang Pilipino reacted angrily to Rigoberto Tiglao's announcement Monday that Estrada was following a script to gain public sympathy.

PMP spokesperson Jesus Crispin Remulla said it was actually Tiglao, spokesperson for President Macapagal-Arroyo, who was mouthing a script written by her publicist Dante Ang and Press Undersecretary Roberto Capco, Ang's supposed "sidekick."

"What script is he blabbering about?" said Remulla. "The trouble here is that Tiglao has become a pathetic mouthpiece of Ang and his underling, Capco, who have both run out of credible stories to tell the public."

Remulla said Estrada had embarked on an "anger strike . . . not hunger strike."

Political debates

Khan said the 14 justices—Associate Justice Bernardo Pardo retired on Feb. 11—had been silent despite the attacks on their credibility because "they don't want to be embroiled in the political debates of our politicians."

"As far as they are concerned, they just want to be independent," he said. "So they don't join the debates (or air their personal opinions)."

Khan also took time to clarify matters surrounding the petition for bail of Jinggoy Estrada, a former mayor of San Juan and the ousted President's son and co-accused.

"It's wrong to say that the Supreme Court denied Jinggoy's petition for bail," Khan said. "The Supreme Court did not say that and did not rule on that. It merely told Jinggoy to raise the issue (to) the Sandiganbayan because his cases are pending there."

Khan said that to ascertain the necessity of granting bail to an accused under preventive detention, the court "needs evidentiary facts."

"(These) will enable the Sandiganbayan to determine whether the evidence of guilt against Mayor Jinggoy is strong enough," Khan said. "If the Sandiganbayan sees that the evidence is not strong enough, then he is entitled to post bail. But that's outside the grasp of the Supreme Court at this point."

Regarding the accusation that Davide showed bias against Estrada for failing to cite for contempt the prosecutors who had walked out of the then President's impeachment trial, Khan said: "The Supreme Court is different from the Senate impeachment court. (The Chief Justice) was just a presiding officer. The senators (are the judges). Nobody brought up anything to cite the prosecutors for contempt. So it's not an issue."

Khan said Estrada and his lawyers should not have complained about the order of the Sandiganbayan special division to hold hearings thrice a week.

"It's for the betterment of the former President," the court official said. "It's only natural for the (plunder proceedings) to be finished as soon as possible because he is under detention."

ESTRADA: Bringing battle from courts to political arena.

Khan also insisted that the special division, which the Supreme Court had formed to handle all the Estrada cases, was not biased against the deposed leader.

"It's not a special court for Estrada because (it is composed) of the same justices of the Sandiganbayan," Khan said. "It's also a result of petitions from various parties, which were filed with the Sandiganbayan."

Ninoy

Arroyo said Estrada would not be able to act out a fast.

The senator recalled that Aquino subsisted on water and salt for 40 days until his jailers were forced to take him to the Veterans Memorial Hospital for treatment.

Aquino embarked on a hunger strike to emphasize his stand that civilians cannot be tried by military tribunals created only for soldiers charged with military offenses.

Arroyo pointed out that Aquino's hunger strike was worth the sacrifice for the thousands of political detainees similarly charged before military tribunals.

Aquino, husband of former President Corazon Aquino, was assassinated at the then Manila International Airport on Aug. 21, 1983, upon his return from exile in the United States.

On the other hand, Arroyo said, Gandhi's theory and practice of fasting were "embodied in his public enactment of self-sacrifice and renunciation to fight for his passionate convictions and noble aspirations for his country and people."

Arroyo said Gandhi lived in extreme and spartan conditions, whether in or out of prison, unlike Estrada, who "luxuriates in an air-conditioned, fully furnished suite at the Veterans Memorial Hospital, surrounded by his family, doctors and nurses and all medical facilities."

"He gives unrestricted media interviews and is allowed round-the-clock conjugal visits," Arroyo noted. "He must be prepared to give up all these. Otherwise, his fast will be meaningless."

Act III

Tiglao said Monday that Estrada's recent moves were part of a script drawn up by his brother, film producer Jesse Ejercito, to gain sympathy from the public.

He said "Acts I and II" of the supposed script called for Estrada's appeal for medical treatment of his eyes and knees, and, later, the dismissal of his defense team.

Tiglao said "Act III" would have Estrada going on a fast, which his handlers would portray as a hunger strike.

But the PMP's Remulla said Tiglao was "an overly rated journalist and a past official of the leftist movement," and was "on the verge of being crazy."

By dragging in the name of Ejercito, "a respected movie producer who has no connection whatsoever with Estrada's decision to dismiss his lawyers, Malacañang's apologists have only shown how desperate and bankrupt they have become," Remulla said.

Estrada's spokesperson Raymond Fortun, a member of the dismissed defense panel, also jumped into the fray, saying in radio interviews that Tiglao was "hallucinating" and had run out of arguments on the issue.

Meanwhile, Sen. Edgardo Angara expressed opposition to the proposed live television coverage of the ousted President's trial.

Saying television was a "cruel medium," the Estrada ally pointed out that no less than the Supreme Court had turned down petitions for live coverage.

"Let the Supreme Court decision stay as it is," he said.

Angara said live coverage of the trial might inflame passions and unduly influence the viewers.

He said any extreme or violent reaction from the viewers might in turn influence the judges.

"A medium that can push the public into misinterpreting facial expressions should not be covering the trial live," he said.

Business shrugs off Erap moves

By Gil Cabacungan Jr.

A YEAR ago, Joseph Estrada's efforts to gain public sympathy might have spooked businessmen and sent the foreign exchange and money markets on a tailspin.

Now, businessmen are just shrugging off the ousted President's latest moves, and the exchange rate, interest rates, and stock market are holding steady.

Raul T. Concepcion, chair of the Federation of Philippine Industries, yesterday said the markets had remained stable despite the "destabilization efforts" of Estrada and his supporters.

He said this proved that investor confidence had taken root in the administration of President Macapagal-Arroyo.

Concepcion also said he was pleasantly surprised that there had been no attack on the peso even if the difference between the black market and the official rates had narrowed to a mere 12 centavos.

He said that had the "destabilization efforts" occurred last year, the exchange rate gap would have easily shot up to not less than 50 centavos.

According to Concepcion, the government's self-confidence is evident in the fall of interest rates to a 15-year low—a development that would have been reason enough for speculators to sell the local currency in exchange for greenbacks.

GMA: 'It's no joke being President'

From page A1

other. I need you)," the denim-clad President said in a message she delivered wholly in Filipino.

"*Hindi po birong maging Pangulo ng Pilipinas* (It's no joke being President of the Philippines)," she said.

She made the surprise appearance amid reports of a mobilization of forces by supporters of Joseph Estrada. Neither her spokesperson Rigoberto Tiglao nor Press Secretary Noel Cabrera knew that she was to go on national television.

Tiglao told reporters at his regular briefing yesterday that the President's TV appearance was the brainchild of her private publicist Dante Ang.

Earlier yesterday, National Security Adviser Roilo Golez admitted that Ms Macapagal's ousted predecessor had recently "resurfaced" as a national security concern.

Chief Supt. Robert Delfin, chief of the Philippine National Police Intelligence Group, said PNP Director General Leandro Mendoza ordered an intensified search for the leader of the pro-Estrada People's Movement Against Poverty after confirming reports that it was mobilizing forces to mark last year's siege of Malacañang.

"He gave instructions to locate and arrest (Ronald) Lumbao. So I directed my team leaders to find (Lumbao)," Delfin said.

But Lumbao continued to elude authorities. Delfin said intelligence agents cased the fugitive's usual "hiding places" in Caloocan and Bulacan, but could not find him there.

Asked why Lumbao was still at large, Delfin said "perhaps he's really afraid to be arrested," and noted that the PMAP leader had not been giving radio interviews lately, "unlike before."

It was Lumbao who allegedly incited Estrada loyalists to attack Malacañang last May 1. He is accused of rebellion before a Manila court.

Delfin also confirmed the statement Monday of Director Edgar Aglipay, chief of the National Capital Region Police Office, that PMAP leaders were in the thick of mobilizing Estrada supporters in time for the first anniversary of the attack on the Palace.

Citing intelligence information, Delfin said PMAP leaders were "back in the same areas where they usually get the warm bodies for their rallies—the Payatas dump site (in Quezon City), and the Parola and Baseco compounds (in Manila) and Caloocan."

Mother

In her TV message, Ms Macapagal talked about the difficulties of the presidency and her commitment as the "mother of the house" to solve the country's problems, particularly poverty.

She started off by saying that she was "already up when the cock crows and starts work after prayer."

She also said that she had inherited "several and difficult problems," and that these were complicated by the Sept. 11 terror attacks in the United States that saw the collapse of world economies.

According to the President, people bent on pushing their interests as well as grabbing power took advantage of the situation.

"I took their hurtful words, their intrigues, their fabrications, and their attempts to destroy my character and my family," she said, adding:

"I carry the hardships and problems of the country. All these are part of my sworn duty despite physical and mental travails.

"And as the mother of the house, I am clear on what I should do—to lift Filipinos from poverty, defend our homes, and improve our livelihood."

She ended with the appeal for help from the people.

At a dinner Monday with broadcasters from dzMM, Ms Macapagal likened herself to former US President Bill Clinton, saying his first three years in office were also difficult for him.

"It looked like everything he did was wrong but in his last year, his efforts paid off," she said. "That looks like what I'm going through now."

The President is currently reading the book "War in a Time of Peace," which deals with, among others, the Clinton presidency.

"When I'm reading it, I feel like what he went through was similar to what I'm going through now," she said.

Appeal

Tiglao described the President's address as a "simple and short appeal for unity" and said "it's within her prerogative to issue occasional appeals."

He did not say whether it was directed to the supporters of Estrada from among the urban poor. But he reiterated the administration's confidence that PMAP leaders would not be able to mobilize forces similar to those who took part in the May 1 siege of Malacañang.

"It's her decision. Let's take the statement for what it is," Tiglao said.

He also said "a lot of announcements made by the President were recommended by her publicist."

GMA-7 reporter Marilyn Cawad said the network received a copy of the taped address about 10 p.m. Monday but that it was not aired.

"One, it was quite late already," Cawad said. "Second, we were not told why the President is making such a statement, and we couldn't make sense of it."

Significant following

In a separate briefing, Golez said Estrada "resurfaced on the radar screen" after he terminated the services of the lawyers defending him before the Sandiganbayan and declared loss of faith in the judicial system.

"He is a national security concern . . . considering that he still has a significant following," Golez said, adding:

"There are some who may be problematic in their temperament, not necessarily the former President, but they might be giving him wrong advice."

On the military end, Armed Forces spokesperson Brig. Gen. Edilberto Adan dismissed reports that shadowy groups were recruiting soldiers for a plot to destabilize the government.

"There is no increased activity that will show an intensified recruitment of some government soldiers to join any destabilization moves," Adan said at a press conference. "There is no indication that any of our units are being recruited to join them."

Adan also said the military was "solid, united, stable."

Many solons . . .

From page A1

He admitted that support for his resolution was not as swift and as overwhelming as the one seeking to allow Estrada to have knee surgery abroad.

The House had effectively shelved the first resolution.

House Majority Leader Neptali Gonzales II said the rules committee agreed to include in yesterday's order of business the resolution filed by Maguindanao Rep. Didagen Dilangalen and the counter-resolution filed by Bayan Muna partylist Rep. Satur Ocampo.

"But we have this gentleman's agreement that we will not take it up until after the break," Gonzales said. The Senate and the House will go on Holy Week recess from March 15 to April 14.

Moot

Ocampo said the one-month deferment could render both resolutions moot and academic because the Sandiganbayan was expected to act on the issue within the period.

He said the resolution for Estrada's exile posed a problem for those who signed the resolution for Estrada's medical treatment.

"Now they have to decide what they really want—medical treatment or exile," Ocampo said.

Dilangalen was reportedly pushing for the plenary to approve his resolution last night.

Macarambon said exile would be the "lesser evil" for the administration.

In his resolution, Macarambon said any "unnecessary concerted action and mass demonstration against the government at this time will result in political instability and wreak havoc on our fragile economy."

"Whereas, immediately sending former President Estrada into temporary exile will avert a political bomb to explode, what with his edgy supporters ready to create extremely unnecessary destabilization actions against the government," it said.

Macarambon said the government should not just ignore the sentiments of Estrada's supporters.

Rep. Marcelino Libanan said that as chair of the justice committee it would be improper for him to support the Macarambon resolution.

"But if I see that this problem will bring us to darkness, I will give my support (to the resolution). As of now, the government says there is still no clear and present danger," he said.

Libanan had earlier told the INQUIRER that the government should consider exile for Estrada to avert Edsa IV, or an uprising by Estrada's supporters.

Cebu Rep. Antonio Cuenco said he would "vigorously oppose on the floor" the Macarambon resolution.

Exile a reward

"Exile is not a penalty. It is a reward. Estrada will be very happy, why give him heaven?" Cuenco said.

Bulacan Rep. Wilfrido Villarama, who served as chief of staff when President Macapagal-Arroyo was Vice President, said sending Estrada into exile was "problematic" because the former President had been charged with plunder.

"If they really want to help Estrada, they should try a more imaginative solution," said Villarama, who disclosed that he would not withdraw his support from the Dilangalen resolution.

Gonzales II and Dilangalen said they would not support the Macarambon resolution.

Like Villarama, Gonzales said Estrada could not be allowed to go into exile because he had been charged with plunder. Gonzales has withdrawn his signature from the Dilangalen resolution.

Dilangalen said he would not support the Macarambon resolution because he was "only for (Estrada's) travel abroad for medical purposes."

He acknowledged that "in a way, the Macarambon resolution affected" his own resolution.

While some House members have withdrawn their signatures from the Dilangalen resolution, others are signifying their intention to sign it.

Dilangalen identified them as Representatives Hussin Amin, Manuel Ortega and Joey Hizon.

Compromise

Deputy Speaker Raul Gonzalez urged the Sandiganbayan to seriously consider allowing Estrada to have knee surgery abroad as a compromise to his allies pushing for exile or uprising.

Gonzalez, who had withdrawn his signature from the Dilangalen resolution, said the anti-graft court could appoint a sheriff or military intelligence personnel, who would accompany Estrada to the United States.

This way, he said, the Sandiganbayan would not lose jurisdiction over the first Philippine President charged with plunder.

Face-saving measure

"I don't know if this will be seen as pressure on the Sandiganbayan but maybe this can be decided as a face-saver," Gonzalez told the INQUIRER.

The former House prosecutor said Ms Macapagal could also save face as she would be freed from the "political agitation" by Estrada's supporters.

"This maybe the only way you can address the situation with both sides saving face," Gonzalez said.

He said exile was out of the question because it was not provided for in the Revised Penal Code.

Rep. Ronaldo Zamora had earlier said that exile had legal basis, citing *destierro*, or banishment, from the place where a crime was committed.

But *destierro* is imposed as punishment only for cases involving husband and wife, according to Gonzalez.

Good enough

Macarambon welcomed Gonzalez's proposal, saying that sending Estrada abroad for medical treatment would be good enough.

"Any of the two (proposals) would appease the supporters of Estrada and those who believe that he is being persecuted," he said.

He objected to being tagged as one of the Estrada allies in an INQUIRER report after he spearheaded the exile resolution.

"I am not an Erap ally. I am an ally of the President because I belong to the Nationalist People's Coalition which is part of the administration coalition but my boss is Danding (Eduardo Cojuangco)," Macarambon said.

Estrada refuses to turn over trial papers . . .

From page A1

the Philippines College of Law dean Pacifico Agabin.

The special division of the anti-graft court handling the Estrada cases had ordered the turnover on Friday, when it approved the withdrawal of the nine lawyers and appointed six de officio counsels from the Public Attorneys Office and the Integrated Bar of the Philippines.

Estrada's refusal to comply with the order complicates the historic plunder trial, the first-ever against a former president, and three other criminal cases.

In his letter, Estrada invoked Canon 21 of the lawyers' Code of Professional Responsibility, under which counsel are "bound . . . from revealing any confidences or secrets unless authorized by (the) client." He also cited Rule 22.02 of the same code, which specifies that "the turnover of all papers and property upon (counsel's) withdrawal should be to the client."

On Monday, Estrada formally rejected the services of Sigfrid Fortun, one of the two IBP lawyers appointed by the court. His spokesperson and former lawyer Raymond Fortun, Sigfrid's younger brother, also said the former President would not recognize the four court-appointed PAO lawyers.

Most of Estrada's former counsel had served him since his aborted Senate impeachment trial. Aside from Saguisag, Cuevas, Agabin and Fortun, the other lawyers Estrada dismissed on Feb. 27 were former Manila Prosecutor Jose Flaminiano and son Jay, Felix Carao, Cleofe Verzola and Delia Hermoso.

Sandiganbayan spokesperson Renato Bocar, chief of the court's legal division, was not available for comment yesterday, as he had gone on leave and could not be reached on his mobile phone.

Saguisag's return

But last week's dismissal apparently does not mean Estrada will no longer receive legal advice from his former defense counsel.

Late yesterday, Saguisag filed a manifestation with the Sandiganbayan to inform the court that he had advised Estrada that he need not attend every hearing, in the same way the late opposition Sen. Benigno Aquino Jr. was not forced to appear before a military tribunal during the Marcos dictatorship.

The court had instructed Estrada and his co-accused to attend every hearing, for him to "disabuse his mind" and "see for himself" the fairness with which the court had been conducting the plunder trial.

Associate Justice Minita Nazario, chief of the special division, said Estrada's allegations of bias was probably the result of "wrong information" given to him by his aides and lawyers.

Quoting from his letter to Estrada, Saguisag said: "You have not complained about the trial, where not one witness has implicated you so far."

"What you have complained about are the bizarre rulings you have been getting from the House, Senate, Supreme Court, Ombudsman and Sandiganbayan, illegally created Special Division."

"I have written to you these thoughts for consideration as I may not appear anymore in court for you after the developments of this week," Saguisag wrote.

He told the Sandiganbayan that Aquino's right not to appear before the military tribunal was even upheld by the Supreme Court in 1975, when it ruled that the refusal of an accused to attend trial or give a deposition after his arraignment shall be considered a "waiver" of that right.

The high court then "sustained (Aquino's) refusal to be present at his own trial, which he claimed was a mere mockery because his conviction had already been preordained."

Thus, Saguisag said he had told Estrada: "You cannot be compelled to appear because of what we said about mockery."

Saguisag, Flaminiano and Verzola remain the counsel of record for Estrada's co-accused son, former San Juan Mayor Jinggoy Estrada.

Erap's instructions

Estrada's instructions to his former lawyers were based on his refusal to accept "any and all lawyers appointed by the court."

"Hence, you are hereby directed to desist from releasing any and all records, evidences and other similar documents and matters to any person or entity, government or private, which legally belong to me in the course of your acting as my defense counsels in any case in the Republic of the Philippines, without my authorization," he said.

"And to desist from cooperating with any person or entity, government or private, who or which I have not consented to be your successor (sic) in all of my cases where you have acted as counsel."

But Joefferson Toribio, one of the four PAO lawyers tapped by the court, said Estrada "must face the consequences of what he's doing."

"It's up to the Sandiganbayan to impose sanctions," he said, noting that Bocar the other day already warned Estrada and his lawyers that they were courting a citation for indirect contempt by attacking the credibility of the Sandiganbayan in media interviews.

The other day, both Justice Secretary Hernando Perez and the lead counsel prosecuting the Estrada cases, Ombudsman Aniano Desierto, said Estrada had no choice but to accept the court-appointed counsel. ***With a report from Michael Lim Ubac***

Tennis players form ATG

THE COUNTRY'S leading tennis players recently formed the Advantage Tennis Group (ATG) to promote and develop the sport by organizing, managing and conducting tournaments that will be sanctioned by the Philippine Tennis Association. The founders were Adelo Abadia, Randy de Guzman, Roland Kraut, Karl Santamaria, Taddy Cruz, Pop Sabandon and Michael Mora III.

SPORTS

Editor **Al S. Mendoza** ◎ *Assistant Editor* **Edwin M. Villanueva**

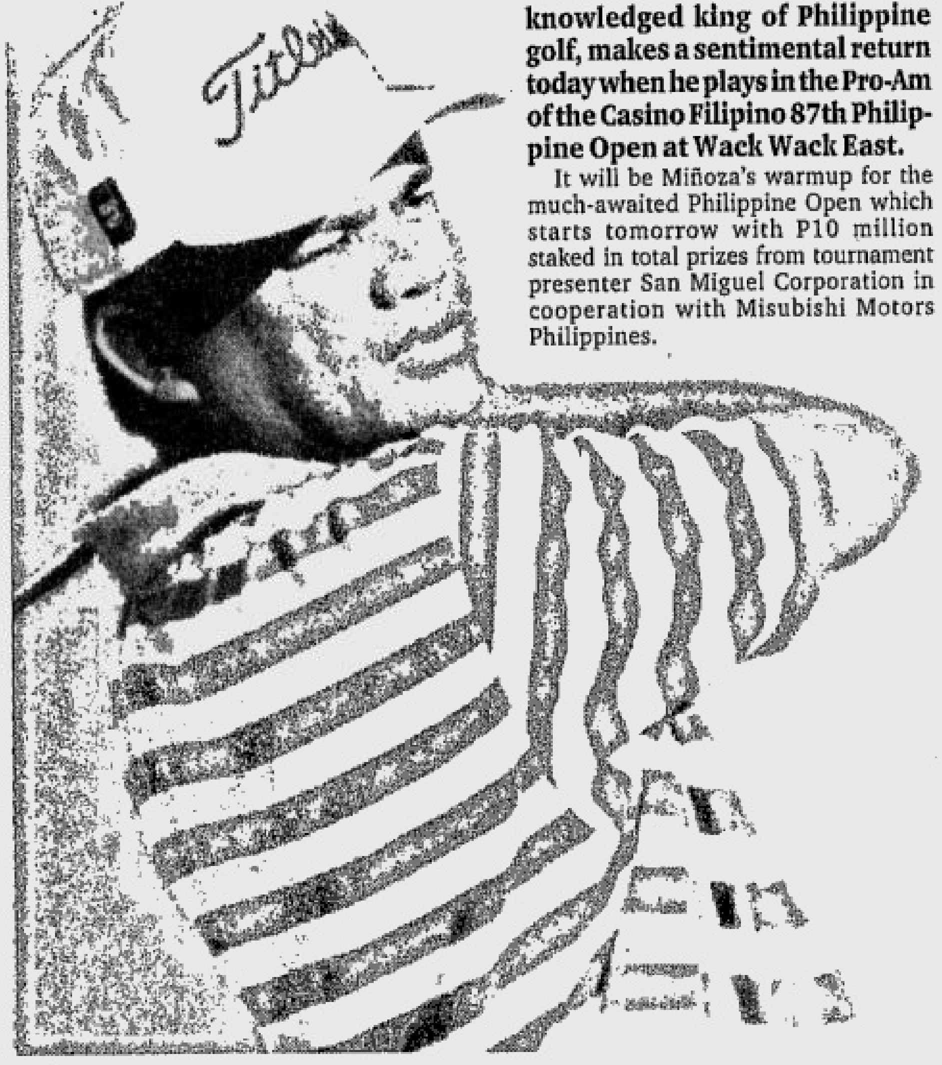
SPORTS ON TV

Compiled by Lorenzo Manguiat

BASKETBALL: NBA—Orlando Magic vs Indiana Pacers at 9 a.m. (r – 4:30 p.m. and 9 p.m.) on ESPN
US NCAA - Syracuse vs Villanova at 1 p.m. (r), Big East Tournament tomorrow at 1 a.m. on ESPN
GOLF: PGA Genuity Championship, Third Round at 2 p.m. (r) Star Sports

CASINO FILIPINO RP OPEN

Miñoza returns with Pro-Am stint today



MIÑOZA: Sentimental return. FILE PHOTO

FRANKIE Miñoza, still the acknowledged king of Philippine golf, makes a sentimental return today when he plays in the Pro-Am of the Casino Filipino 87th Philippine Open at Wack Wack East.

It will be Miñoza's warmup for the much-awaited Philippine Open which starts tomorrow with P10 million staked in total prizes from tournament presenter San Miguel Corporation in cooperation with Misubishi Motors Philippines.

The 42-year-old Miñoza is paired with Wack Wack president Ben Abalos, who is also co-chair of the RP Open executive committee together with NGAP president Rod Feliciano.

As of presstime, Abalos, who is also MMDA chair, is awaiting word whether or not President Macapagal-Arroyo will join today's championship flight of the Pro-Am.

If plans don't miscarry, First Gentleman Mike Arroyo might be the third amateur in the Miñoza foursome.

Minoza and his three teammates will tee off at 6:30 a.m. for the first shotgun start. The second shotgun tee off is at 12 noon.

Some 180 amateurs amateurs were distributed to 60 pros, 20 of them Filipinos, in a format that calls for the best score from each foursome counting.

Prizes totalling P400,000 will be given away via a raffle.

The winning pro gets $500, runner-up $300 and third $200. The rest of the pros will earn $100 each as per rules of the Asian PGA.

Taylor Made-adidas has put up P300,000 for the raffle giveaways. Some P100,000 worth of appliances will also be raffled off beginning at 6:30 p.m. today.

Aside from Miñoza, also seeing action today, among others, is defending champion Cassius Casas, Rodrigo Cuello, Gerard Cantada, 2000 champion Gerald Rosales and Danny Zarate.

"They will be distributed to the Open's major sponsors and top officials," said Gen. Antonio Abaya of Fortune Tobacco. "Since this is more of fun for our amateurs from the corporate world than anything, we are making it sure that everything is in order up to the awarding ceremonies."

Abaya is being assisted by NGAP director Vicente "Teng" Santos in today's staging of the Pro-Am, with Andy Dumlao as chief coordinator.

Also playing today are Feliciano, Wack Wack general manager SP Malbarosa, tournament committee chairman Danny Pizarro, NGAP directors like Alice Andrada, Admiral Luisito Fernandez, Tony Garcia, Boy Lantin, and Freddie Masigan and organizing committee chairman Benny Gopez.

"We doff our hats off to all those who supported us again this year," said Feliciano. "Staging the RP Open has always been a major concern of the NGAP. There were hitches along the way, but with perseverance, we are pulling through as always."

PAF, Sunday FC reach finals

PHILIPPINE Air Force and Sunday Football Club downed separate rivals last Sunday to reach the finals of the Nike Futsal Open at the Ateneo de Manila's Moro Lorenzo Sports Center.

PAF clobbered KAYA Football Club, 8-4, to advance in the men's division 1 final against Philippine Army, which lost to Philippine Christian University, 0-4.

SFC, on the other hand, downed Union Fenosa, 8-3, to dispute the men's division 2 title against University of the East, a 7-3 winner over Letran.

Manila Football Club and Los Borachos will clash in the men's division 3 final while De La Salle will face Ateneo in the women's final.

Playing for third and fourth places in this four-weekend tournament held in cooperation with the National Capital Region Football Association (NCRFA) are PCU-Taft, KAYA, Union Fenosa, Letran, Alabang Grins, Lateo, DLS-Zobel and Blue Guards.

Nike Phils. marketing coordinator and soccer expert Rely San Agustin looks forward to an exciting finals on March 9.

POC releases guidelines for Asiad subsidy

THE PHILIPPINE Olympic Committee has announced the guidelines for its new program providing training subsidy to selected athletes who will participate in the Busan Asian Games this September.

Based on the guidelines, athletes must have "excelled" in the 2001 Southeast Asian Games or any equivalent or better international competitions, and have probable chance of qualifying for Busan Asiad.

NSAs (national sports associations) may recommend one or two athletes who have the best chance to excel in the Asiad. They (NSAs) must request and justify application for subsidy for the international competition.

According to POC president Celso L. Dayrit, this new program is in line with "the POC's commitment to assist NSAs in the development of their respective sports in order to achieve better results in the Busan Asiad."

NSAs which will receive Olympic Solidarity subsidy—Archery, Athletics, Fencing, Judo, Shooting and Taekwondo—are no longer eligible for this POC program.

The IOC OS has approved support totalling US$70,000 for nine athletes from these NSAs. These are archer Purita Joy Marino, tracksters Eduardo Buenavista, John Lozada and Christabel Martes, fencer Walbert Mendoza, judoka John Baylon, taekwondo-jins Roberto Cruz and Veronica Domingo and shooter Rasheya Jasmin Luis.

Dimaporo appeals Palaro case

REP. Bobby Dimaporo yesterday appealed for his home province, Lanao del Norte, to be considered host of the Palarong Pambansa this year.

Dimaporo dispelled fears that his province has peace and order problems, a reason used by the Philippine Sports Commission and the Department of Education to back Naga City's bid to host the event instead of Tubod.

Dimaporo said the conflict going on Basilan is "very far from Lanao del Norte, which is the most peaceful and safest place in Mindanao."

He added that Tubod, which is about 400 kilometers from Basilan, never had any kidnapping case in four years and that the last recorded encounter with rebels in the province was two years ago when then President Joseph Estrada launched an all-out war against the Moro Islamic Liberation Front.

"The situation now in Mindanao is in a better shape especially with the Balikatan exercises going on," said Dimaporo. "And I have full confidence in the ability of the Armed Forces that the conflict in Basilan won't reach Lanao."

Dimaporo, together with his wife, Gov. Imelda Dimaporo, is trying everything to win the hosting of the event which eluded them the past two years due to lack of funds on the part of the organizing DEC, and PSC and the MILF conflict, respectively.

"This is a good opportunity to show that the conflicts are not all over Mindanao and are just going on in isolated areas," said Dimaporo. "And even in those isolated areas, the military is under control."

Dimaporo also cited the world-class sports complex which the province specifically built for the 1999 Palaro. "It is the best in the country right now, and it would best be used for the event which it was intended to in the first place."

Antonio grabs lead; Pacis draws Torre

ANTONIO

Standings after four rounds:
Antonio 4 points; Torre, Garma, Senador, Martinez, Sinangote, Suelo, Balico, Pacis, Tolentino, Dela Cruz, Legaspi, Labay, 3.5; Sales, Ranola, Maga, Milagrosa, Vasquez, Leysa, Datu, Flores, Gicain, Cabrido, Gatus, Amper, Gabawan, Mendoza, Abas, Ballecer, Pandan, Mayor, Villavieja, Pasotorizo, Ulanday 3.

GRANDMASTER Joey Antonio defeated NM Andrew Vasquez to grab the solo lead and remain the only player with four full points in as many rounds yesterday in the 2002 La Union Open Chess championship at the Marco Bldg. in San Fernando City, La Union.

Antonio, who has an Elo rating of 2595, had earlier beaten IM Ildefonso Datu in the third round to bring his total to four, or a half-point ahead of 12 other players, including GM Eugene Torre.

Torre, the highest-ranked player in the tournament, was held to a draw by veteran NM Adrian Pacis in the fourth round.

The draw dropped Torre into a tie four 2nd to 13th places with IM Chito Garma, NMs Emmanuel Senador, Rolly Martinez, Julius Sinangote, Roberto Sucio, Jerome Balico, Pacis, Rustom Tolentino, Jake dela Cruz, Rhobel Legaspi and Rainier Labay.

Garma, a veteran Olympian like Antonio and Torre, halved the point with Dela Cruz.

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SPORTSWATCH

Spring Oil, Cebu Selection join Seaba cagefest

RP-Spring Cooking Oil and the Cebu Selection to be backed by the Guardo Group will represent the Philippines in the 5th SEABA Games starting on March 10 at the Cebu Coliseum in Cebu City. Seven-time best import awardee Bobby Parks will banner RP-Spring Cooking Oil, which topped the NBL championship, while the Cebu Selection, to be coached by Boy Cabahug, will be reinforced by some members of the RP Youth Team. Expected to grace the opening ceremony are Cebu City Mayor Tommy Osmena, POC chair Robert Aventajado, PSC chair Eric Buhain and commissioner Butch Ramirez, BAP president Tiny Literal, VP-Visayas Juan Aquino, regional director George Bragat and Cebu City Sports Commission chair Jonathan Guardo. The tournament serving as qualifying for the 13th ABC Champions Cup in April in Kuala Lumpur, is being supported by Accel, official outfitter of the national team, Burlington Sock, YKL Color and Molten ball. Meanwhile, the RP Youth Team, representing Sumilao town, beat Maramag, 97-87, in the first Gov. Jose Ma. Zubiri Cup Open invitational basketball tournament at the Bukidnon State College Gym.

Celtics beat 76ers; Kobe apologizes to Lakers

BRYANT

PHILADELPHIA — Paul Pierce scored 28 points and Antoine Walker added 17 Monday to lead the Boston Celtics to a 100-94 victory over the Philadelphia 76ers. Boston had lost four straight and 10 of its past 15 games. It was the Celtics' first victory since trading Joe Johnson, Milt Palacio and a first-round pick to Phoenix for Tony Delk and Rodney Rogers. Eric Snow and Derrick Coleman each had 16 for the Sixers, who had won three in succession. Philadelphia missed an opportunity to move into a three-way tie with Boston and Orlando for second place in the Atlantic Division and the No. 4 spot in the Eastern Conference. Meanwhile, Kobe Bryant told his Los Angeles Lakers teammates he's sorry he has to miss two games. He's not saying sorry to Reggie Miller. "I apologized to my teammates, that I can't join them on the court. But not as far as he goes, no," said Bryant, with one game remaining on his two-game suspension for starting a fight with Indiana's Miller on Friday night. "The fact of the matter is, I made a mistake. It wasn't the best decision in the world. I have to deal with consequences. I'll just move on and continue to grow and mature as a man," Bryant, 23, said Monday after practice as the Lakers prepare to face the New Jersey Nets on Tuesday.

Asked about a small scrape on the left side of his face, Bryant smiled and said, "It's like a little baby scratch. He got a lot more than I did."

COMPLETE RESULTS

Celtics 100, Sixers 94; Hawks 95, Grizzlies 76; Jazz 100, Nuggets 82; Trail Blazers 107, Kings 95. *AP*

Garcia rules Fr. Godofredo Open golf tourney

ROLAND Garcia, Class 1968 alumnus of Paco Catholic School, ruled the First Fr. Godofredo Open Golf Tournament title held recently at the Club Intramuros, Manila. Garcia also aced hole N o.6 and earned cash prize and trophy in this event held in honor of Fr. Godofredo Aldenhuijsen, founder of the Paco Catholic School. The Dutch priest also built the San Fernando de Dilao parish church where he served for 44 years, from 1931 to 1975. Msgr. Domingo A. Cirilos Jr., incumbent Paco Catholic parish priest, did the ceremonial tee-off with tournament director Joey Castro (Class 81), and Paco Catholic School Alumni Association Rey Mones (Class 71). Msgr. Cirilos took second runner-up honors in the Class B division with a score of 70. August Cruz, Betty Tan and Melvin Devilleres triumphed in Class A, B and C, respectively. Lito Pua won Class D.

Hernaez defeats 400 rivals in mini 4WD race

JAMES Hernaez bested more than 400 competitors to capture the Trax weekly mini 4WD race recently at GameworX Inc., located at the fourth level of Festival Supermall in Alabang. Representing Team G, Hernaez pocketed P3,000 and a trophy for ruling the tourney sponsored by GameworX. "It's very hard yet very fulfilling to win because there are so many entries," said Hernaez. Hernaez also lauded the organizers for their continued support to mini 4WD racing, headed by Christian Datol, GameworX's marketing manager. Mayo Tuano, representing Wowow Racing Team, took the first runner-up title with P2,000, while Joone Rubio wound up third for P1,000.

Plugging the hole

CLEAN LIVING

Manolo R. Iñigo

CDC (Clark Development Corp) officials are debunking the report that water is contaminated at the former military base, stressing that "since the initiation of the regular monitoring program dating back to 1997, the quality of water in Clark has passed the Philippines' national drinking water standards."

"The water is safe," said CDC president and CEO Emmanuel Angeles, whose family owns Angeles University in Angeles City, Pampanga. "We are assuring the people, including our workers and investors, that Clark water is not contaminated and fit to drink."

In a press statement, CDC said an environmental baseline study was conducted in the Clark Special Economic Zone in the middle of 1997 in response to numerous reports of death and diseases from residents around the base (notably at the Clark Evacuation area where 20,000 families were evacuated after the eruption of Mt. Pinatubo in 1991).

The study showed that there are 14 sites in Clark where the ground contains different hazardous pollutants, including petroleum products, pesticides and other hazardous substances used in the normal operation of a military base. These sites have been isolated and not leased to investors in the economic zone, the CDC said, adding that at the same time, certain deepwell sources that are contaminated have been immediately plugged and sealed off from the whole water supply system.

The CDC is also set to implement in the first quarter of this year a P5-million cleanup projects at the sites that were identified to have soil contamination, focusing on Clark's Wagner Aviation Area where the ground is contaminated with polychlorianted biphenyl (PCB), a hazardous substance commonly used as insulation fluid in electrical transformers. PCB is listed by the US Environmental Protection Agency as a "probable" susbstance or agent producing or inciting cancer of the liver and digestive tract system.

According to Juan Miguel Fuentes, CDC environmental and management chief, CDC is presently working with local and foreign institutions to address the issue of contamination in the former American military base. A health survey is also currently being undertaken in Mabalacat, the municipality right outside Clark, with the main objective of identifying potential pathways of the contaminants leading to the long delayed cleanup.

For the last several years, local groups have been asking the US government to clean up the contamination their soldiers left in Clark, but have little progress. I have also been opposing the plan of longtime friends to build a modern sports complex in Clark because the presence of toxic waste in Clark will be harmful to the physical and mental health of the athletes who will be training there. I hope they could prove me wrong.

***

TOO GOOD TO BE TRUE. Billiards patron Putch Puyat, Sandy Javier of Andok's fame and Hermie Esguerra are three of the most influential and much admired men in Philippine sports, particularly in horseracing, because they are honest, approachable and utterly convincing. There is no upper-class snootiness in them even though they are rich and famous. Instead, they have the common touch and their manners are good. Take for example my kabayan Hermie Esguerra, the third point of the pyramid. Only recently, he donated to the Philippine Open golf tournament P1.1 million representing the winner's purse of his magnificent horse "Wind Blown," champion of last week's First Gentleman Silver Cup at the Santa Ana Park. Whattaman!

Clark to host dance tourney

THE PIONEER Dance Sport Council of the Philippines will mark its first major event for 2002 by staging the national quarterly ranking and competition at the world-class Fontana Convention Center at Clark Field in Pampanga on March 7-9. It will culminate with the much-awaited dance competitions starting at 10 a.m. on Saturday, with Clark Development Corp. president and CEO Dr. Emmanuel Angeles heading the special guests.

"Everything is ready," said DSCP president Becky Garcia, adding that the activities will also be highlighted by a teachers and adjudicators' course under the auspices of the DSCP and its affiliate, the Professional Dance Teachers' Association, headed by Cynthia Mamon.

On March 7 and 8, a workshop for Latin and Standard competitors and adjudicators will be conducted by international coach and licensed adjudicator Wolfgang Opitz of Germany. Spicing up the affair is dance demonstration by professional Latin champions Marcus Homm and Charlotte Egstrand. For details, call Vikky Cabrera at 635-0116 or Rubie at 752-0435/36.

Saturday's interesting competitions will pit dance athletes from Metro Manila, Luzon, Visayas and Mindanao in the juvenile, junior, youth, ProAm, senior, PreAm, amateur and ten dance categories both in the Standard and Latin disciplines.

Aside from Ms Garcia, the other DSCP officers are lawyer Jo Saliva, treasurer Glo Alcala and lawyer Andy Fornier, Marvie Cojuanco Yulo, Naomi Enriquez, Edward Hayco and Tonette Lagdameo, directors. Sponsors of the blue-ribbon affair are the Philippine Sports Commission, Philippine Olympic Committee, Clark Air Field Development Corp., Fontana Resort and Country Club, Dance Exchange, ABC 5 and Savannah Moon.

Peña lifts San Miguel to 1st win

Game Tomorrow (Makati Coliseum)
6p.m.—Sta. Lucia Realty vs Talk N Text

By June Navarro

FOR a while, Federal Express seemed poised to bury San Miguel Beer deeper into the cellar. Until Dorian Peña came to the rescue.

Peña scored eight of his nine points and made an important steal in the homestretch as he lifted San Miguel Beer to a thrilling 79-75 win over FedEx last night in the PBA Samsung Governors Cup at the Philsports Arena.

Taking SMB imports Mario Bennett and Lamont Strothers out of the limelight, the 6-foot-7 Peña went out of his way in the final quarter to help the Beermen pick up their first victory of the season after three straight setbacks.

"We just refused to lose. It was a total team effort but Dorian (Peña) was in the center of it all," said interim San Miguel coach Siot Tanquincen after sending the Express to their third loss in five games.

Bennett, the Beermen's high-profile import, again led the Beermen with 25 points and 14 rebounds but the former NBA journeyman's energy suddenly fizzled out in the final minutes.

Instead, Peña took everything upon himself, hammering his beefy frame inside, plucking important rebounds and grabbing loose balls to the delight of San Miguel fans.

Peña's pair of freethrows in the last 57.6 seconds and a one-handed slam, which completed his steal off Bong Alvarez, finished the Express off.

Jermaine Walker topscored for FedEx with 30 points.

Meanwhile, the Seigle brothers—Andy of Purefoods and Danny of San Miguel Beer—finally came to terms with their respective teams Monday night after they signed multimillion-peso deals worth P18 million each.

Both are expected to earn no less than P500,000 a month in a span of three years excluding attractive perks such as won-game incentives and placement bonuses.

SAN MIGUEL 79—Bennet 25, Strothers, 13, Lago 11, Duat 10, Peña 9, Belasco 8, Victoria 3, Mente 0.

FEDEX 75—Walker 30, Alvarez 28, Arboleda 5, Pumaren 3, De Ocampo 3, Moore 2, Capobres 2, Friedhof 2, Codiñera 0.

Quarters: 26-18, 52-36, 53-63, 79-75.

2 more summer basketball classes venues open

MILO BEST Center announced yesterday the opening of two more venues for this summer's basketball classes.

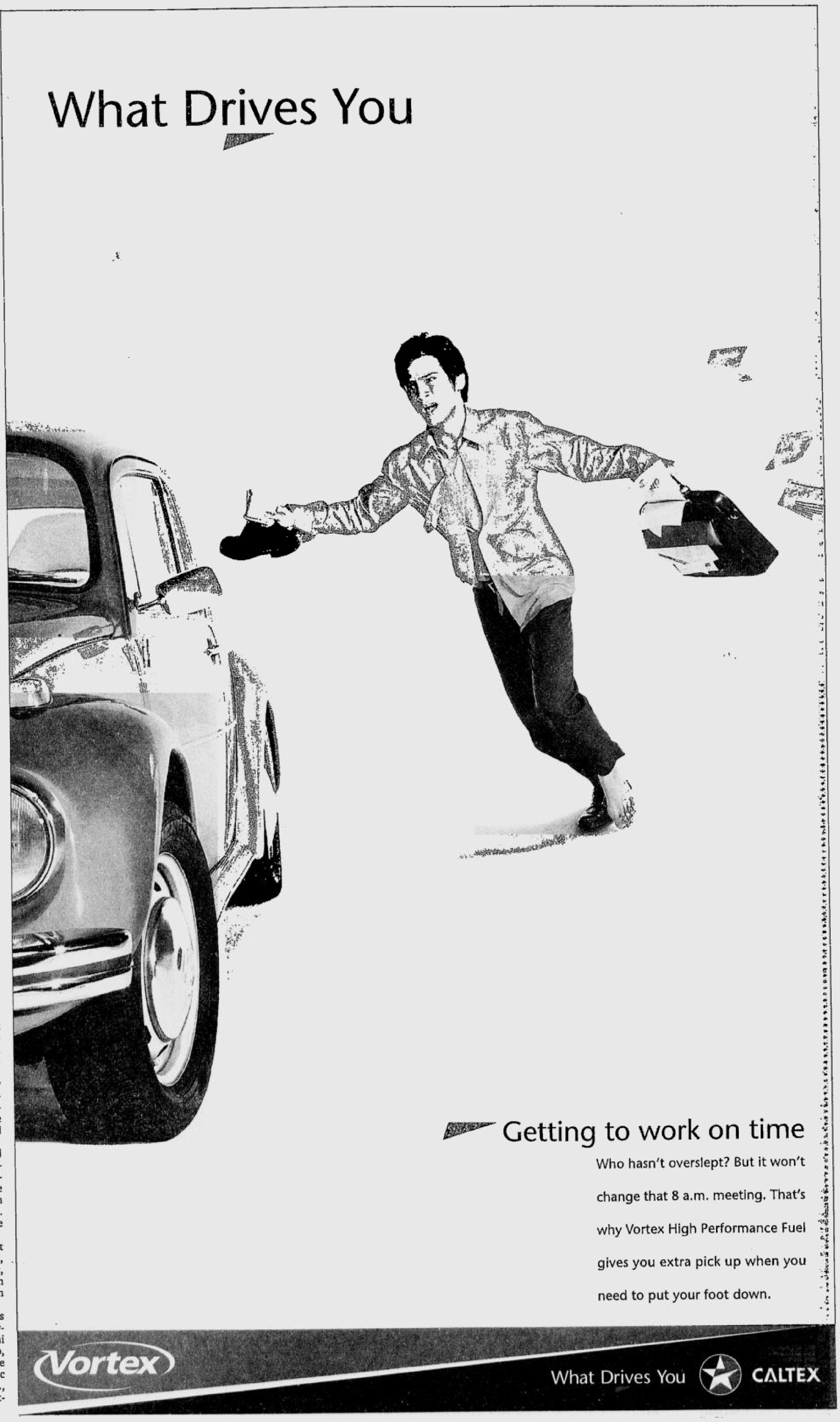
The new venues are Flos Carmeli Institution in Fairview Park, Quezon City and Jose Rizal University along Shaw Boulevard.

Level 1 and 2 sessions for boys and girls 7 years old and above will be conducted from 8 to 11:30 a.m. at Flos Carmeli every Monday and Thursday on April 4 to 25.

Level 1, 2, 3 and 4 clinics for age group 7 and above will be staged from 1 to 4 p.m. at JRU every Tuesday and Friday on April 2-26.

BEST Center classes are also scheduled at Notre Dame of Greater Manila in Caloocan City and Arellano University courts in Legarda, Pasay and Caniogan, Pasig.

Interested parties may register either at The BEST Center at Scout lozano corner Scout Reyes, Barangay Laging Handa, QC, tel. Nos. 411-6260 and 372-3065/66 or at Dansel Groom Shops/ Sensei Salon, 5/F Holiday Inn Manila, UN Avenue, tel. No. 525-8191.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8 nabbed for P170M piracy /A20

METRO

Editor Louie C. Camino

Travel agency wants dads cited for contempt /A20

Actor sued by ex-girlfriend for abandoning their 2 kids

GUEVARRA and wife Kim de los Santos.

FILE PHOTO

By Christian V. Esguerra

YOUNG actor Dino Guevarra is facing charges for abandonment and child abuse for allegedly failing to provide financial support for his two children by his former girlfriend.

Monica Maite Gonzales filed the complaint before the Makati City prosecutor's office alleging that Guevarra, a former mainstay of the GMA-7 teen show "TGIS," refused to give financial support for their children, aged 4 and 3.

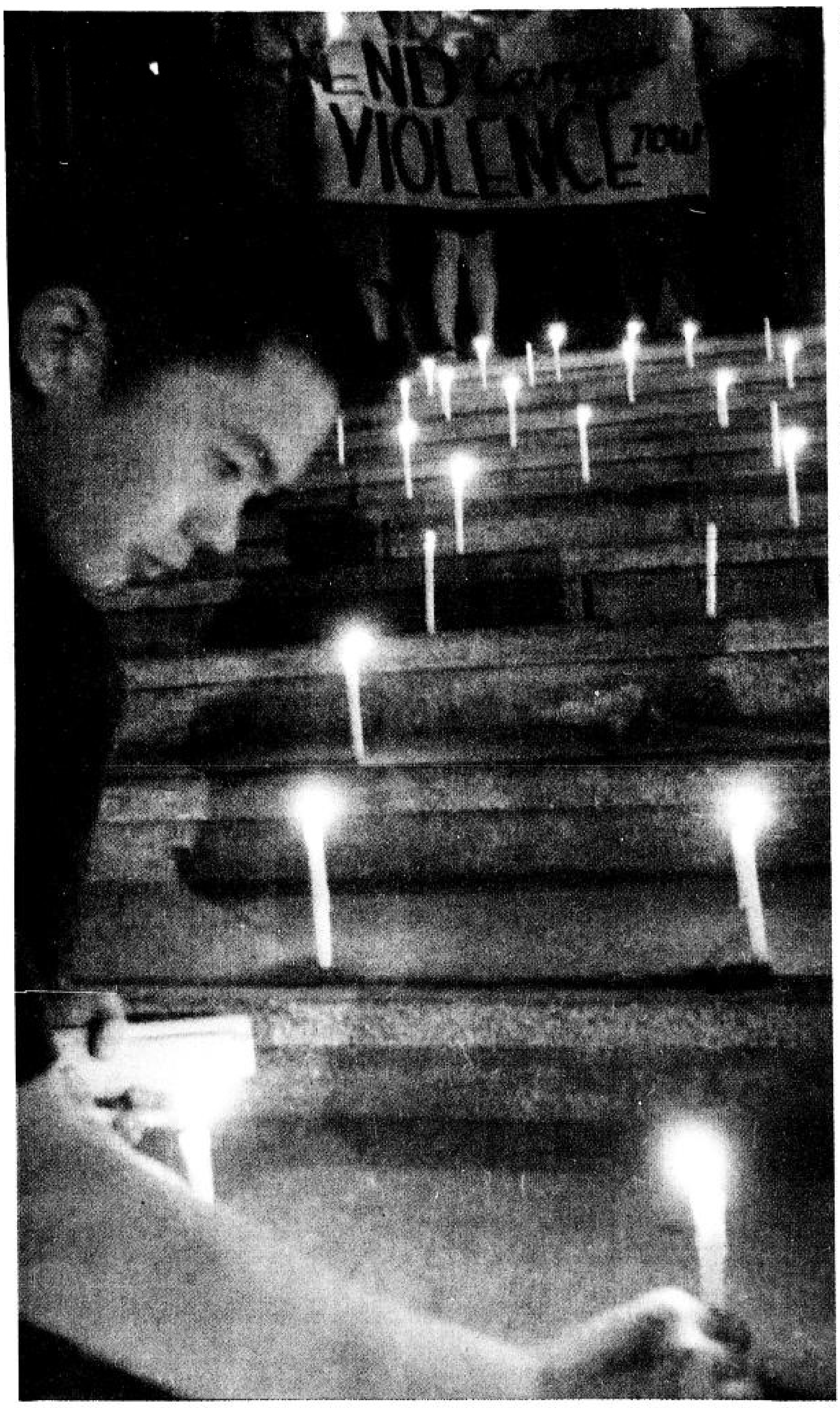
In her three-page complaint-affidavit, Gonzales said Guevarra refused to comply with a court order that granted a petition for child support that she filed in 1999. She said the court ordered Guevarra, whose real name is Dino Ross, to give P6,000 in monthly financial support for his older child.

But since September 2000, Guevarra has refused to comply with the court order, Gonzales said. She said the unpaid support for their older child alone is estimated at P108,000.

Gonzales and Guevarra met in April 1995 while shooting the movie "Roller Boys" where they played supporting roles. Guevarra went on to star in several other teen-oriented films, but has since taken a respite from show business.

His present wife is Kim de los Santos, who also used to do teen features on TV and in movies.

UP frats in truce



LIGHTING up the way to peace, candles are set up on the Diliman campus. JOAN BONDOC

By Agnes E. Donato and Leah Salterio

HEADS OF rival fraternities Scintilla Juris and Sigma Rho at the University of the Philippines have agreed on a truce and vowed to keep the student council election peaceful.

UP vice chancellor for student affairs Tessa Jazmines arranged for the two heads to meet in her office.

"They agreed to bury the hatchet and forget the past," Jazmines told the INQUIRER yesterday. "That's not their generation anyway," she said. "I told them you cannot correct a mistake with another mistake."

Tension between the two fraternities mounted on the state university campus last week and threatened to erupt into a rumble after a Quezon City court convicted 5 of 10 Scintilla Juris frat members for the 1994 murder of Dennis Venturina, a member of Sigma Rho.

Officials of the Crusade Against Violence (CAV) also said yesterday the decision on the Venturina case made fraternity men think twice before joining rumbles.

Jazmines last week suspended the UP election campaign period due to fears of skirmishes between the rival frats.

"One of the pressure points was the campaign because one of the candidates in the Student Council is a Sigma Rhoan," Jazmines explained.

"Last Thursday and Friday, the two frats had very tense shouting matches on the (College of Arts and Science) steps. If police hadn't arrived, they would have come to blows and a lot of people would have been hurt."

Two of the acquitted suspects in the Venturina killing, Raymund Narag and George Morano, yesterday went to the office of Judge Jose Catral Mendoza, who penned the decision, and expressed willingness to help in the campaign against campus violence, said the judge.

"They now know that they could actually be sent to jail for getting themselves in campus violence," CAV national president Carina Agarao said of the members of the rival frats who agreed to have a truce.

Agarao and CAV Chair Gerarda Villa, mother of fraternity hazing casualty Lenny Villa, together

UP FRATS/ A20

GMA gives go-signal for ₱3-B flood project

By Christian V. Esguerra

ARROYO

PRESIDENT Macapagal-Arroyo has given the go-signal for the construction of the controversial P2.9-billion flood-control project in Taguig and nearby areas.

Benjamin Abalos Sr., chair of the Metro Manila Development Authority, yesterday said the President ordered the resumption of the project following a series of consultations with residents and concerned government agencies.

Last month, Malacañang suspended the construction of the 9.8-kilometer floodway, stretching from Bicutan in Taguig to Taytay in Rizal, due to opposition from residents and local politicians.

Residents feared the road dike project would devastate large tracts and affect about 50,000 residents around Laguna Lake.

Abalos said government was able to persuade concerned residents that the project can help solve the perennial flood problem in their areas.

But he did not elaborate how the government will address the concerns raised by residents.

After suspending the project, Ms Arroyo went to Lower Bicutan in Taguig for a consultative meeting with residents.

In a statement, the Taguig local government yesterday said the President "reconsidered her earlier decision and sought for a 'win-win' solution to the problem."

Funded by the Japan Bank for International Cooperation, the project will resume in three months, Taguig announced in the same statement.

WAZZZZUP ?
ENTERTAINMENT GUIDE

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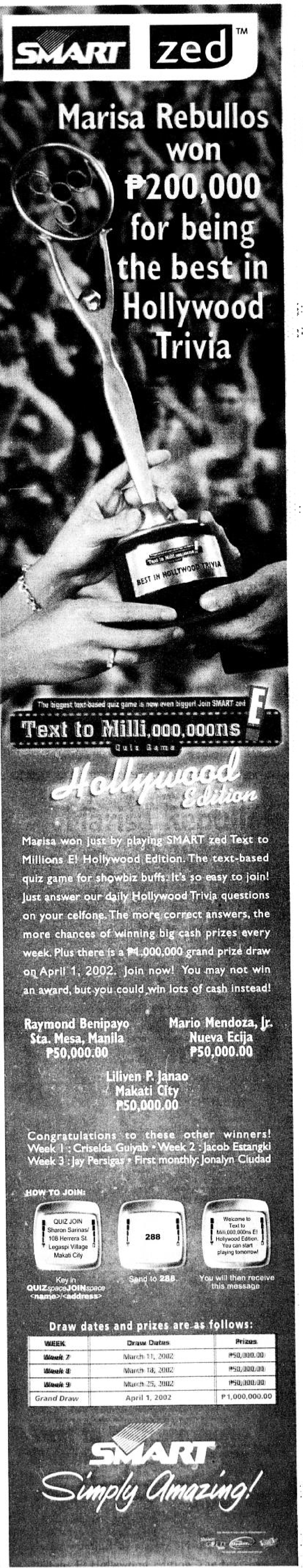

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Congratulations to these other winners!
Week 1 : Criselda Guiyab • Week 2 : Jacob Estangki
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QUIZ JOIN Sharon Sarinas/ 108 Herrera St. Legaspi Village Makati City

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288

Send to 288.

Welcome to Text to Milli,000,000ns E! Hollywood Edition. You can start playing tomorrow!

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Draw dates and prizes are as follows:

WEEK	Draw Dates	Prizes
Week 7	March 11, 2002	₱50,000.00
Week 8	March 18, 2002	₱50,000.00
Week 9	March 25, 2002	₱50,000.00
Grand Draw	April 1, 2002	₱1,000,000.00

SMART Simply Amazing!

Incredible, but here's why Gerry Peñalosa failed to stop Joel Avila

BARE EYE

Recah Trinidad

(MIXED-UP: It was Plaridel, Marcelo H. del Pilar, the great writer and propagandist, who helped inspire, together with Andres Bonifacio, the main character in Ave Perez Jacob's "Ang Pagdating ni Elias Plaridel," lead tale in the author's collection of 27 short stories that was launched at the Polytechnic University of the Philippines on Thursday. I got the first names of my heroes mixed up and identified Plaridel as Gen. Gregorio del Pilar. Terrible. Please forgive me for that awful slip. Anyway, it would also be a sin if other main figures, who helped make the Jacob *lunsad-aklat* extremely relevant and successful, don't get deserved credit. *Pareng* Ave extends his gratitude to Dr. Ofelia Carague, PUP president, Dr. Normita Villa, VP for research, and Dir. Romy Martin of the PUP Department of Human Relations for the unforgettable event.)

* * *

THERE were no post-fight rave reviews but the leading man was not to blame.

Yes, the Gerry Peñalosa-Joel Avila title bout at the Makati Coliseum, a big bore, is top candidate as the non-fight of the year hereabouts.

It lured a sizeable crowd, after fight drumbeaters succeeded in selling Avila, a virtual unknown, as a tough guy with a good chance of upsetting Peñalosa, who's cramming to get another crack at the world 115-pound crown.

Sorry to say this, but some exasperated ringsiders left in a huff while Peñalosa and Avila were still locked in a sweaty embrace.

Not a few of those who stayed behind failed to conceal their disgust. They either asked the performers to cut off the obscenity or just get out of the ring, right away.

One paying spectator took it upon himself to shout out the real score. He stood up, told Peñalosa and Avila at the top of his voice to fight now and stop their lousy sparring session.

* * *

Who's to blame for the Makati Coliseum bore that mercifully got halted due to a headbutt in the eighth?

Definitely not Gerry, the conceded lead man of the show, although the guy could end up being accused of pulling his punches.

Peñalosa would either freeze or cool off at the hottest point of the contest.

Most fans, naturally, were left wondering why Peñalosa had to stall and hesitate when he could have gone for a knockout once he had pummeled and set up Avila.

Some cynics were displeased enough to accuse Peñalosa of suffering from withdrawal syndrome.

There was credible suspicion that Peñalosa had held fire.

Anyway, a post-fight probe, done very quietly and whose result was bared to the Inquirer by sportsman Rudy Salud, Peñalosa's manager, bared that Avila had utilized an unusual defense that effectively held off his tormentor.

Mr. Salud tried to come up with an apt tag for Avila's strange weapon.

This reporter suggested Sinner's Whisper.

* * *

You see, Avila, initially offered P100,000 to fight Peñalosa, went home with his negotiated P200,000 intact.

But if, by any twist of fate, Avila had been frisked and caught with his strange shield before the fight, he would have either been banned or sent to a psychologist.

The defense Avila had used may not be found in any boxing book.

Why? Because it was utterly foul and, therefore, unacceptable in boxing, a sport Muhammad Ali has helped make noble.

Strictly, the defense Avila used was not a shield but a pitiful plea.

Roman Catholic priests regularly get it whenever they would hear confession.

* * *

The result of the informal probe, reported Rudy Salud, bared that Avila had repeatedly asked Peñalosa not to finish him off.

Short of begging for his life, Salud said, Avila would clinch, bring his lips close to Peñalosa's ear and mumble that woeful sinner's plea.

Based on a post-fight inquiry, the words Avila would say in begging for mercy went thus: "Idol, idol, *gumagalang ako, huwag mo na akong saktan.*"

Please, I respect you, please don't hurt me anymore, Avila would mutter.

Incredible. In the first place, how could a ring warrior, a challenger who successfully secured a big purse, and even went on to brag he would finish off his foe, sink shamelessly, sickeningly low?

* * *

Peñalosa was himself too stupefied and now has evidently lost interest in immediately rumbling with another Pinoy contender. That's according to his manager.

Gerry is scheduled to leave soon for California to hook up with Freddie Roach, the ring expert behind Manny Pacquiao's resurgence. Gerry has also been scheduled to fight at least twice in the United States, before keeping his scheduled date with WBC super flyweight champion Masamori Tokoyama, who terrorized and bloodied him with head butts in Yokohama last September.

Anyway, stunning as it was, the post-fight revelation about Avila's cheap ploy did not fail to amuse involved parties.

For the record, it was discovered through a curious post-fight interview conducted by two sports broadcasters, both respected in the field.

Just the same, the drowsy, unpalatable result of the Peñalosa-Avila show on Saturday should lead local boxing authorities to find ways to protect the sport and its fans.

There should henceforth be a chicken-heart check for future crown challengers.

8 nabbed for ₱170M piracy

By Philip C. Tubeza

A TEAM led by the National Bureau of Investigation arrested eight undocumented Chinese for producing P170 million worth of pirated CDs and pornographic VCDs in Valenzuela City.

NBI Director Reynaldo Wycoco said that a team composed of NBI, Bureau of Immigration and Bureau of Customs agents arrested the Chinese and seized their replicating machines and pirated VCDs in barangays Maysan and Karuhatan in Valenzuela.

Wycoco identified the suspects as John Sy Tan, Wen Kai Zheng, Chin Gua Liu, Sheng Yang, Ren Hai Ho, Cai Zhi Ying alias Jason Wong Chua, Kun Hong Chim alias Peter Tan Sy, and Chin Kum Hong, together with Monica Chua.

The raiders said they confiscated two replicating machines, 17 boxes with 900 CDs in each box, 14 boxes with 900 pornographic VCDs, and other materials used in making fake CDs and VCDs.

He said the NBI began investigating the case after receiving intelligence information that the Chinese were making pirated CDs.

On Feb. 28, the raiding team, led by NBI agents Rafael Ragoz and Eric Santos, raided the homes of the Chinese in Maysan and Karuhatan.

Wycoco said the Chinese were invited for questioning after they failed to show documents regarding the status of their stay in the country.

He said the suspects were charged before the Valenzuela prosecutor's office for violating the country's Tariff and Customs Code and immigration laws and for illegal reproduction of VCDs.

Court rejects TRO petition of FEU students

By Jerome Aning and Philip Tubeza

A MANILA regional trial court has refused to issue a temporary restraining order sought by 233 Far Eastern University accounting students to stop school officials from pushing through with the comprehensive examination yesterday.

By the time the decision came, more than 200 FEU BS Accountancy students had already walked out of their exam yesterday to protest the school's decision to add another year to their four-year course.

Judge Rodolfo Ponferrada of Manila RTC Branch 17 junked the students' petition for TRO because they "failed to show that they will suffer from material damage and irreparable injury" by not taking the comprehensive exam originally scheduled for 1:30 p.m. yesterday.

"There is nothing wrong with taking the comprehensive exam," the judge ruled after hearing lawyers of both parties argue the case for about half an hour. "If the students study (for the exam), they will be more prepared for the board."

After the hearing, Sanlakas lawyer J.V. Bautista, the students' counsel, told reporters he would advise them not to take the exam, because in doing so, "the case would suffer tremendously and could collapse."

Judge Ponferrada still has to rule on the students' main petition for writ of preliminary injunction and their claim for P68 million in damages.

The FEU administration, represented by lawyer Antonio Abad, contended that the special comprehensive exam is a graduation requirement imposed by the expanded curriculum program of the Commission on Higher Education.

But the students countered they should not have taken the exam because the school illegally added another school year to their curriculum.

"For four years, we have been religiously paying our tuition but the FEU administration is still greedy, adding two more semesters for us to pay," said Kissy Dy, spokesperson of the 233 graduating accountancy students who walked out.

Dy said FEU could stand for "the Fastest Earning University."

UP frats . . .

From page A19

with other CAV officials, visited Judge Mendoza in his office and thanked him "for his fair decision." "In the midst of a number of verdicts being assailed by the public, the judgment you rendered on the case is a welcome development," the CAV said in a letter to Mendoza.

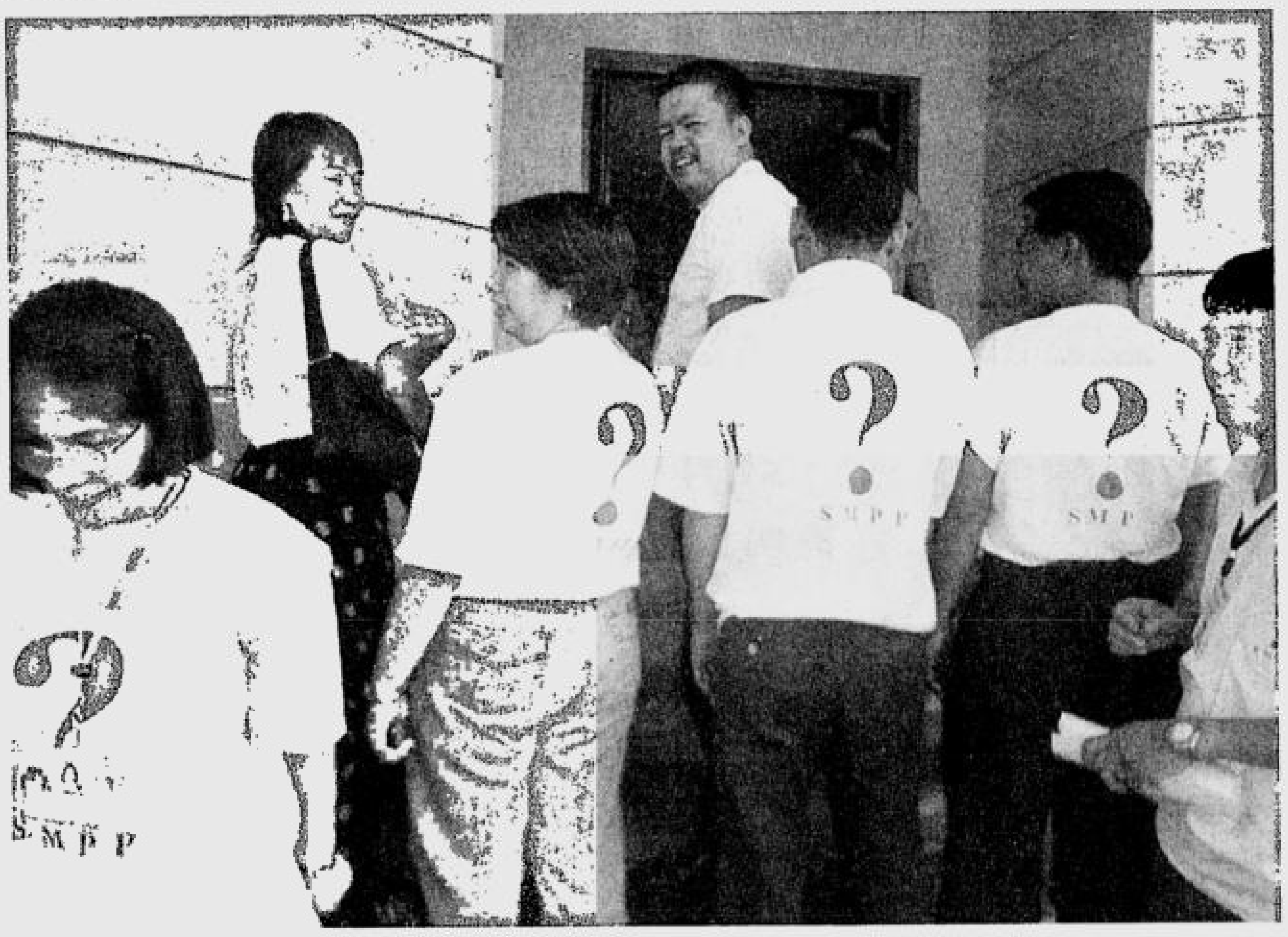
"The importance you placed on the lives of our youth and how they are unnecessarily wasted by the distorted sense of values imposed by these fraternities is very clear in the judgment you rendered," the letter said.

Judge Mendoza was working at his computer when the CAV officials and a bevy of reporters entered his chamber. He admitted to the group that he could not satisfy all parties in his decision.

"But I always pray that I do not send an innocent man to jail," the judge said.

Venturina was killed on Dec. 8, 1994 when members of Scintilla Juris attacked while he and his fraternity brothers were eating at the Beach House Canteen on the UP campus.

Mendoza convicted Robert Michael Alvir, Danilo Feliciano Jr., Christopher Soliva, Julius Victor Medalla and Warren Zingapan for the killing. He acquitted Reynaldo Ablanida, Carlo Jolette Fajardo, Gilbert Magpantay, Morano and Narag.



UNDER QUESTION

Members of the Samahan ng mga Manggagawa ng Paliparan sa Pilipinas show off their T-shirts with question marks, symbolizing their protest against the opening of Terminal 3 of the Ninoy Aquino International Airport in November. The workers are afraid they would lose their jobs when the present Terminal 2 moves to the new one.

ROGER MARGALLO

Pinoys who 'suspiciously befriend' tourists in Ermita may be arrested

By Philip C. Tubeza

ALARMED by the rising number of cases of foreign tourists being victimized by criminals in Manila's tourist district, the Ermita police station chief is taking drastic action.

Supt. Manolo Martinez said he has ordered his men to arrest locals who "suspiciously befriend" foreign tourists.

"We should be pro-active," Martinez said of his order, which is expected to raise protests from human rights activists. "We can't afford to be reactive."

He said he ordered his men to arrest persons who suspiciously befriend foreigners just to break up the encounters. He said police can legally hold persons for six hours without filing charges.

"I don't mind getting accused of violating human rights," he said in Filipino. "We need to prevent these incidents."

He explained that members of so-called "Ativan gangs" usually befriend their prospective victims before drugging them to sleep and then robbing them of their valuables.

"These people befriend foreigners here in Manila but they bring their victims to the suburbs, where they rob them," Martinez said.

Two recent foreign victims even found themselves in Bulacan and Laguna when they woke up from the effects of the drug, police said.

Martinez said his order aims to prevent these crimes by simply interrupting the encounter and by taking custody of the "friendly" Filipinos even for just a few minutes ``to see what happens."

He said the suspects do not have to be brought to the police station.

"It's the foreigners who complain," he said. "They ask my men why we interfere with their girlfriends," Martinez said.

The Ermita police station covers the Ermita commercial district, Rizal Park, and Intramuros. One notorious Ativan Gang member has reportedly victimized several foreign tourists in Intramuros by pretending to be a Citibank vice president.

The suspect would even give his prospective victims a calling card identifying himself as a bank executive.

Travel agency wants dads cited for contempt

A TRAVEL agency has asked the Manila regional trial court to cite for contempt 15 top officials of the Philippine Councilors League who allegedly disregarded a contract on hotel accommodations for PCL members who attended a convention in the city two weeks ago.

In a seven-page petition dated Feb. 26, Hafti Tours Inc. general manager Sandy Dy said the PCL officials used the accommodations they secured directly from the hotels and disobeyed a court order that prohibited them from doing so.

Hafti asked the court to cite for direct contempt PCL national president Froilan Melendrez, national chair Elmer Datuin, vice chair Vicente Veloso, accommodations committee chair Richard Ibay, three advisers, congress directors and other committee chairs.

Dy said she gave copies of the court order to the 20 four- and five-star hotels that accommodated the estimated 5,000 delegates, who participated in the Feb. 21-23 convention.

The tour operator presented copies of the registration books and the lists of delegates billeted at the various hotels, which showed that the PCL, and not Hafti, arranged for the accommodations of the delegates.

Dy lamented that she "could only look helplessly as these hotels and the PCL wantonly and patently disregarded, violated and completely disrespected the TRO the court issued.

On Jan. 5, the PCL signed a contract that authorized Parañaque City-based Hafti to negotiate with the hotels for the accommodations and transportation of the delegates, records showed.

But on Jan. 26, the PCL National Board voted to rescind and revoke the contract with Hafti, citing the travel agency's failure to secure additional amenities.

Hafti sued the councilors' organization for breach of contract, and on Feb. 18, Manila RTC Branch 50 judge William Simon Peralta issued a five-day temporary restraining order prohibiting PCL from dealing directly with the hotels.

Earlier, Ibay, who had recommended Hafti, and Melendrez accused each other of trying to obtain "kickbacks" by overpricing the accommodations fees of the delegates.

The swapping of charges later resulted in the mass resignation of convention committee chairs.

Jerome Aning

Tinga thanks Cayetano for support

TAGUIG Mayor Sigfrido "Freddie" R. Tinga has thanked Taguig-Pateros Rep. Alan Cayetano for supporting the municipal government in providing water services to residents of Sitio Sto. Nino in Western Bicutan.

Excavation has started for the laying of water pipes that will run through Champaca, Sambong and Sampaguita (formerly Veteran's Road) streets. The project is funded by the Western Bicutan Water and Main Supply Association (Webwasa), led by Kagawad Loreto Añonuevo.

The P5,580,000 pipe-laying project is under the supervision of municipal engineer Marcelo Serpajuan. Cayetano allocated P1.8 million for another ongoing pipe-laying project in the area.

Both projects will connect with Manila Water Company Inc.'s main line on the East Service Road.

"The bottom line of these ongoing projects is that both are for the benefit of the citizens of Taguig," Tinga said in a statement. "I thank Congressman Cayetano for his support."

He added: "All that is required is proper coordination with the municipal government. It would be to the advantage of the Taguigeños if Congressman Cayetano and I could work together for the development of Taguig."

Qualifying test

MSA Academic Advancement Institute, a tutoring school, on March 9 will give a qualifying test to high school students who are valedictorian candidates.

Students who pass the qualifying test will receive scholarships to the MSA College Entrance Tests Review Class. They may take review classes without paying tuition. They will also be given MSA review books for their personal use.

For details, please call 925-7544, 925-721, 435-6062, 646-8243 and 646-8245

'A BEAUTIFUL MIND'

A beautiful film

By Stella O. Gonzales

"The only thing greater than the power of the mind is the courage of the heart."

REVIEW

IN JANUARY, CNN talk show host Larry King said he found "A Beautiful Mind" so terrific he volunteered to refund tickets of moviegoers who would not like the film. So confident was he that nobody could resist enjoying the movie that he even posed his challenge twice to prove he was serious.

It is not known if anyone took up King's challenge, but days later the film won the Golden Globe for Best Picture. It's neck-to-neck with "Lord of the Rings: The Fellowship of the Rings" in the Oscars later this month.

Why did King and the Hollywood Foreign Press find the movie outstanding? What could be so interesting about the life story of John Forbes Nash Jr. (Russell Crowe), a mathematical genius who lost his mind to schizophrenia and fought back to win the 1994 Nobel for economics?

Fortunately, "A Beautiful Mind" is much more than just about math, or a mathematician, or mental illness, or winning the Nobel.

It is about the triumph of the human spirit when things look bleak. It is about finding something inspiring in a man's battle against his own mind. It is also about us, the audience, learning a little bit more about this degenerative mental disorder called schizophrenia, without the filmmakers ramming the information down our throats.

Obsession

The film starts in 1947 with Nash entering Princeton. The handsome West Virginian is arrogant, lacks social skills and is intolerant of the rigid educational system (he refuses to attend classes).

He has a single obsession: "to find one truly original idea," believing it was the only way his life would ever matter.

In the early '50s, Nash did produce an original idea called Game Theory—the mathematics of competition. It would later be considered revolutionary because it contradicted the 150-year-old doctrine of Adam Smith, the father of modern economics.

During the Cold War, Nash wins a coveted research and teaching post at MIT. Enter Alicia (Jennifer Connelly), a physics major, who asks him out to dinner. After a non-traditional courtship, the two marry.

Their world crumbles when Nash is diagnosed with paranoid schizophrenia. It takes decades, but through sheer willpower and Alicia's support, Nash goes back to "reality" and carries on with his life. He emerges triumphant and wins the Nobel.

Howard delivers

Director Ron Howard gives the viewer a glimpse into the schizophrenic mind. How he does it is what astounded so many film critics.

Howard, bless him, decided to tackle a difficult issue, mental illness. In his own way, he was able to promote an awareness and understanding of mental health. For this he has been getting compliments from ordinary people who come up to him on the street, thanking him for making the movie because they have family members who are schizophrenic.

Hopefully, he gets the same recognition in the Oscars where he is nominated for best director.

Akiva Goldsman's script is a blast. In one scene, he has Nash telling his roommate: "I'm quite well balanced. I have a chip on both shoulders." In another, he has Nash talking about "exchanging body fluids."

Goldsman won the Golden Globe for best screenplay and is nominated in the Oscars.

Crowe's performance, as always, never fails to amaze most people. Once more, he shows us why GQ in 1999 called him the next Marlon Brando. He communicates so intensely with just his facial expression and mannerisms.

If you loved Crowe as Bud White, the tough detective with a soft spot for women, in "L.A. Confidential," or if you admired his transformation into Jeffrey Wigand, the paunchy middle-aged tobacco industry whistleblower in "The Insider," or marveled at how his Maximus could express varying degrees of emotion merely through his blue eyes in "Gladiator," then you will not be disappointed with "A Beautiful Mind."

Crowe does not act; he gets into the character he is playing. In this movie, you will not see Russell Crowe, the actor. You will see him transformed into John Nash. You will empathize with Nash as he grapples with his illness, you will care for him, you will want him to recover, and you will cheer for him when he emerges victorious.

For this movie, Crowe won the Best Actor award in the Golden Globe and the British academy. He has been nominated—for the third straight year—in the Oscars.

Crowe was Howard's first choice to play Nash. It turned out to be a wise choice. As Howard later said, "A Beautiful Mind" wouldn't have been possible without Crowe.

Amazing Connelly

Connelly is a revelation.

She was one of several actresses who had to read for the role of Alicia and she got the part after Howard and the producers saw how she ably matched Crowe's intensity. As Howard had observed, a less talented actress would have been overwhelmed by Crowe's acting skill.

There is chemistry between Crowe and the beautiful Connelly (to call her pretty would be an insult)—a very important factor in a movie where the audience must be convinced that Alicia's love for her husband makes her stay with him when most women would have skipped town.

Connelly won the Best Supporting Actress award in the Golden Globe and the British academy. She is nominated in the same category in the Oscars.

Omissions

There have been some negative reviews of the film, most of them ranting about the filmmakers' omission of some critical parts in Nash's life.

Maybe it is well to keep in mind that the producers have described the movie as "inspired by the events in the life" of Nash and "loosely based" on the biography by Sylvia Nasar. They never claimed it was a "true-to-life" story.

The critics complained that the movie became "too Hollywoodish" and left out Nash and Alicia's divorce (they later remarried), Nash's involvement with another woman that produced a child, Nash's supposed bisexuality, among others.

As Crowe said, if they did Nash's "true-to-life" story, then the audience would have had to stay in the cinema for about 72 years.

And it might be worth noting that Nasar herself has come up to defend the movie.

Some dimwits said Crowe shunned the bisexuality bit because he was probably worried it would affect his macho image.

Hello? Crowe played a gay in the 1994 Australian movie "The Sum of Us." That never bothered him.

Educational experience

"A Beautiful Mind" is a must-see not only for those whose family or friends are suffering from mental illness, or for health professionals assigned in mental wards who treat their patients like unfeeling, stupid people. It is not just for Crowe's fans who want to see him in a tight-fitting white T-shirt as he lectures in class, or for the curious who want to see what the fuss about the film is all about.

As Crowe eloquently said in his Golden Globe speech: "A Beautiful Mind" is just a movie. It's just a piece of entertainment at the end of the day. But hopefully it helps us open our hearts, gives us a little more understanding, gives us a little more compassion, and also hopefully it makes us believe that in our lives something extraordinary can always happen.

I must disagree in one respect. "A Beautiful Mind" is not just entertainment. It is an educational encounter.

CROWE'S feat. Russel plays Nobel Prize winner John Forbes Nash Jr.

Comedy of quiz-show errors

VIEWFINDER

Nestor U. Torre

QUIZMASTER: *Sino ang bidang lalake sa pelikulang* "Pido Dida"?

Contestant: Bentot!

(Kris Aquino costarred with Bentot? No, Rene Requiestas!)

* * *

Quizmaster: What physical attribute is comedian Palito known for?

Contestant: Baba!

(No, that's Babalu. Palito is known for being as thin as a—well, *palito.*)

* * *

Quizmaster: What is the preposition in this sentence: "I am in love."

Contestant: Am!

(No, in!)

* * *

Quizmaster: *Ano ang tawag sa maliit na bundok*?

Contestant: Bundok!

(No, burol.)

* * *

Quizmaster: *Sa aling* sport *sikat si* Bong Coo?

Contestant: Taekwondo!

(No, bowling!)

* * *

Quizmaster: *Anong hayop ang* bronco *na ginagamit sa* rodeo?

Contestant: Buffalo!

(No, horse.)

* * *

Quizmaster: Complete this lyric: *Nang isilang ka sa mundong ito, laking tuwa ng _____ mo.*

Contestant: Tatay!

(No, magulang.)

* * *

Quizmaster: What is the opposite of macro?

Contestant: Macro!

(No, micro.)

* * *

Quizmaster: *Sino ang kasalukuyang hari ng* Spain?

Contestant: Ferdinand!

(No, Juan Carlos.)

* * *

Quizmaster: How many feet does an insect have?

Contestant: Four!

(No, six.)

* * *

Quizmaster: How many brain cells does a human being have?

Contestant: 405?

(Speak for yourself! No, 15 billion.)

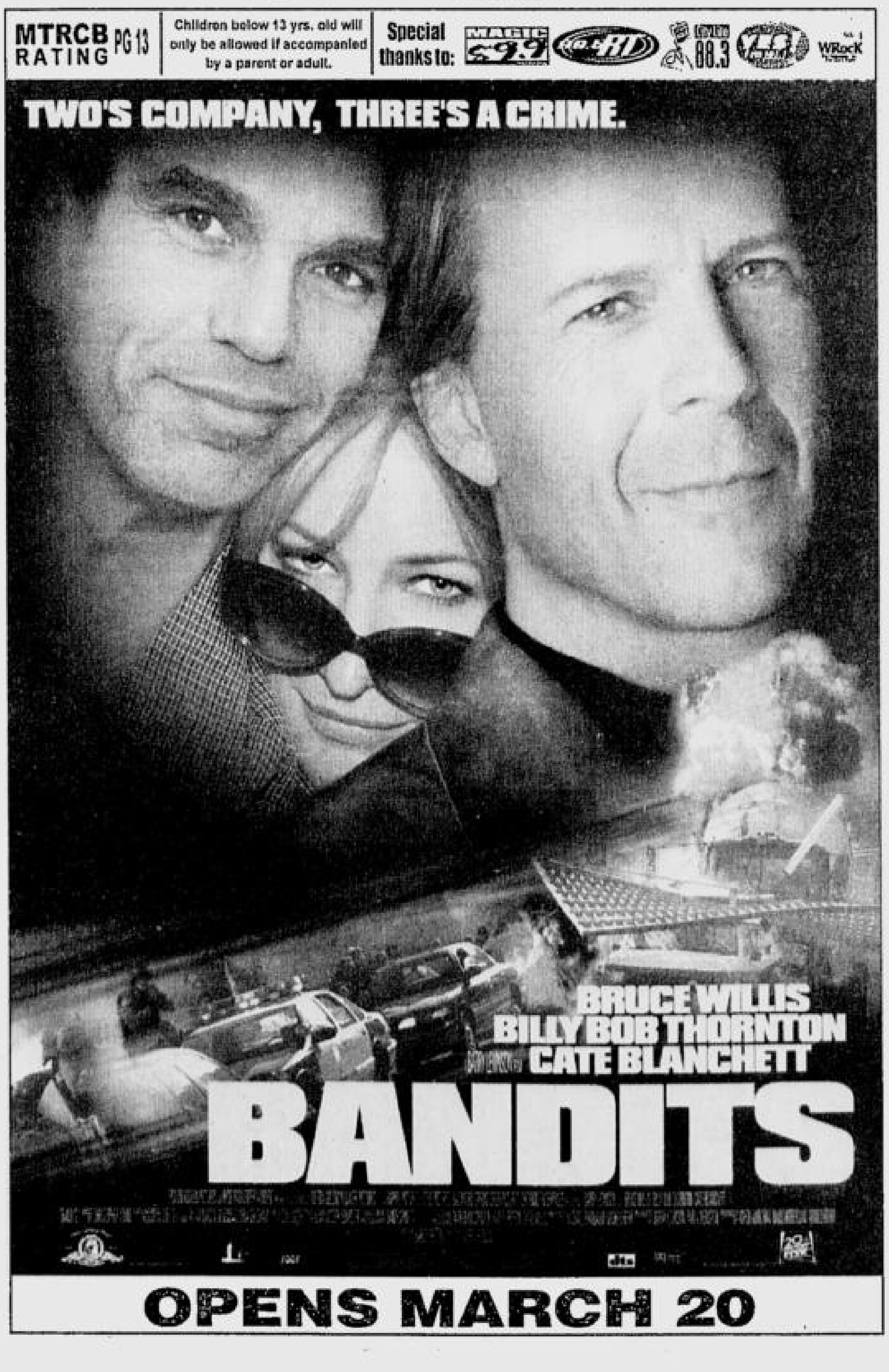
More 'American Adobo" updates

JUST in from the States, these additional facts and figures on **Laurice Guillen**'s "American Adobo" and the good business it's doing in the US:

The movie has become the most successful Filipino film released in the US, with a combined gross of $162,000 after four weeks of release in selected theaters in New York, L.A. and San Francisco. (It will open in Toronto, Canada in April.)

On the film's opening weekend in New York, it grossed $40,000, with a per-screen average of $13,000—better than the $11,000 per-screen average of "Black Hawk Down."

At the Village East Cinema in Manhattan, the theater owned moved "American Adobo" from a 200-seat theater to a 400-seat venue the week after it outsold "I Am Sam" (with Oscar nominee **Sean Penn**) on its opening weekend.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P 13
CINEMA 2 | WE WERE SOLDIERS
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R 18
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1	13 GHOSTS
2	NOT ANOTHER TEEN
3	WE WERE SOLDIERS
4	GOT 2 BELIEVE
5	BEAUTIFUL MIND
6	BATAS NG LANSANGAN
7	ALI
8	ESKANDALOSA

SM CENTERPOINT
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1	GOT 2 BELIEVE
2	13 GHOST
3	A BEAUTIFUL MIND
4	SHALLOW HAL
5	WE WERE SOLDIERS
6	ESKANDALOSA
7	NOT ANOTHER TEEN
8	ALI
9	BATAS NG LANSANGAN
10	MOTHMAN PROPHECIES

SM CITY FAIRVIEW
9350749

1	BATAS NG LANSANGAN
2	SHALLOW HAL
3	ALI
4	WE WERE SOLDIERS
5	A BEAUTIFUL MIND
6	GOT 2 BELIEVE
7	WE WERE SOLDIERS
8	NOT ANOTHER TEEN
9	BATAS NG LANSANGAN
10	ESKANDALOSA
11	13 GHOSTS
12	GOT 2 BELIEVE

SM CITY MANILA
5236240

1	NOT ANOTHER TEEN
2	A BEAUTIFUL MIND
3	13 GHOSTS
4	WE WERE SOLDIERS
5	MOTHMAN PROPHECIES
6	COLLATERAL DAMAGE
7	ESKANDALOSA
8	IKAW LAMANG . . .
9	GOT 2 BELIEVE
10	SHALLOW HAL
11	ALI
12	BATAS NG LANSANGAN

SM MEGAMALL
6331901 • 6329401

1	MOTHMAN PROPHECIES
2	ALI
3	WE WERE SOLDIERS
4	A BEAUTIFUL MIND
5	NOT ANOTHER TEEN
6	13 GHOSTS
7	COLLATERAL DAMAGE
8	SHALLOW HAL
9	BATAS NG LANSANGAN
10	GOT 2 BELIEVE
11	IKAW LAMANG . . .
12	ESKANDALOSA

SM CITY NORTH EDSA
9295452

1	ESKANDALOSA
2	GOT 2 BELIVE
3	ALI
4	BATAS NG LANSANGAN
5	NOT ANOTHER TEEN
6	13 GHOSTS
7	A BEAUTIFUL MIND
8	WE WERE SOLDIERS
9	CLOSED
10	CLOSED
11	CLOSED
12	CLOSED

SM SOUTHMALL
8066888

1	13 GHOSTS
2	NOT ANOTHER TEEN
3	WE WERE SOLDIERS
4	GOT 2 BELIEVE
5	COLLATERAL DAMAGE
6	SHALLOW HAL
7	BATAS NG LANSANGAN
8	A BEAUTIFULMIND
9	ALI
10	ESKANDALOSA

SM CITY CEBU
2313876

1	MOTHMAN PROPHECIES
2	SHALLOW HAL
3	HINOG SA PILIT
4	MARSHALL DICK
5	BATAS NG LANSANGAN
6	ALI
7	GOT 2 BELIEVE
8	A BEAUTIFUL MIND

SM CITY ILOILO
3209422

1	RIDING IN CARS
2	CLOSED
3	RAT RACE
4	FROM HELL
5	GOT 2 BELIEVE
6	THE OTHERS
7	CLOSED
8	SHALLOW HAL

SM CITY PAMPANGA
7128015

1	A BEAUTIFUL MIND
2	SHALLOW HAL
3	RAT RACE
4	GOT 2 BELIEVE
5	HINOG SA PILIT
6	BATAS NG LANSANGAN

SM SUPER CTR. SUCAT
8294075

1	GOT 2 BELIEVE
2	A BEATIFUL MIND
3	WE WERE SOLDIERS
4	BATAS NG LANSANGAN

SM CINEMA GUADALUPE
8820984

1	ESKANDALOSA
2	WE WERE SOLDIERS
3	BATAS NG LANSANGAN

SM CINEMA TUTUBAN
2514302

1	WE WERE SOLDIERS
2	ESKANDALOSA
3	GOT 2 BELIEVE
4	BATAS NG LANSANGAN

SM CITY DAVAO
2976998

1	SHALLOW HAL
2	RAT RACE
3	HINOG SA PILIT
4	MOTHMAN PROPHECIES
5	GOT 2 BELIEVE
6	ALI

SM BICUTAN

1
2
3
4

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SM CITY CAGAYAN DE ORO

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2
3
4

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1
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2	WE WERE SOLDIERS
3	ALI
4	GOT 2 BELIEVE

G4 (GLORIETTA 4)

1	NOT ANOTHER TEEN MOVIE
2	ALI
3	A BEAUTIFUL MIND (THX)
4	SALSA
5	SHALLOW HAL
6	WE WERE SOLDIERS
7	13 GHOSTS

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2	A BEAUTIFUL MIND
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4	GOT 2 BELIEVE
5	ALI

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MOVIE GUIDE

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1 (DDS)	ALI
2 (SDDS)	WE WERE SOLDIERS
3 (DTS)	COLLATERAL DAMAGE
4 GOLD (DTS)	A BEAUTIFUL MIND
5 GOLD (DOLBY)	WE WERE SOLDIERS
6 GOLD (SDDS)	13 GHOSTS
7 GOLD (DOLBY)	NOT ANOTHER TEEN
8	BATAS NG LANSANGAN
9	GOT 2 BELIEVE
10	GOT 2 BELIEVE

Pearl Plaza Cinemas
(Parañaque) tel. 853.4486

1	GOT 2 BELIEVE
2	
3 (DTS)	BATAS NG LANSANGAN
4	ESKANDALOSA
5	
6 (DTS)	
Golden Pearl THX	

Masagana CINEMA
(Pasay) tel 833.3274

1	BATAS NG LANSANGAN
2	A BEAUTIFUL MIND
3	ESKANDALOSA

starmall Movies
(Shaw Blvd.) tel 724.4986

1	BATAS NG LANSANGAN
2	GOT 2 BELIEVE
3	NOT ANOTHER TEEN
4 (DOLBY DIGITAL)	WE WERE SOLDIERS
5	ESKANDALOSA

METROPOLIS star
tel 850.4285

1	BATAS NG LANSANGAN
2	GOT 2 BELIEVE
3	ESKANDALOSA
4	WE WERE SOLDIERS
5	NOT ANOTHER TEEN
6	13 GHOSTS
7	RESERVE
8	RESERVE

PREMIERE CINEMA THX
(Makati City) TEL. 751-2010 TO 13

1	A BEAUTIFUL MIND

Center Plaza Cinema
(Balanga, Bataan) tel (047) 237.7007

1	IKAW LAMANG . . .
2	RIDING IN CARS . . .

FCM FAIRVIEW CENTER MALL, INC
tel 930.9515

1	ESKANDALOSA
2	GOT 2 BELIEVE
3	BATAS NG LANSANGAN

Spring
(Libertad, Pasay City) tel 831.7864

1	ESKANDALOSA
A	BATAS NG LANSANGAN

Sunshine
(FTI, Taguig) tel 838.4301 loc. 3376

1	BATAS NG LANSANGAN
2	GOT 2 BELIEVE
3	ESKANDALOSA
4	

GOTESCO CINEMA

Gotesco City
(Manila) tel 734.8588

1 (DOLBY)	BATAS NG LANSANGAN
2	
3	
4	ESKANDALOSA
5	13 GHOSTS
6	GOT 2 BELIEVE
7 (DTS)	A BEAUTIFUL MIND
8 (SDDS)	NOT ANOTHER TEEN
9 (DOLBY)	WE WERE SOLDIERS

Gotesco Caloocan
tel 362.3508

2	ESKANDALOSA

Gotesco Grand Central
(Caloocan) tel 364.3781

1	BATAS NG LANSANGAN
2	NOT ANOTHER TEEN MOVIE
3	ESKANDALOSA
4 (SDDS)	BATAS NG LANSANGAN
5	GOT 2 BELIEVE
6 (DOLBY)	WE WERE SOLDIERS
7 (DTS)	A BEAUTIFUL MIND
8	13 GHOSTS
9	ALI

Gotesco Commonwealth
tel 951.0083

1 (DTS)	WE WERE SOLDIERS
2	BATAS NG LANSANGAN
3	ESKANDALOSA
4	GOT 2 BELIEVE
5 (SDDS)	A BEAUTIFUL MIND
6	WE WERE SOLDIERS
7 (DOLBY)	NOT ANOTHER TEEN MOVIE
8	ALI

Gotesco Ortigas
tel 656.6795

1	BATAS NG LANSANGAN
2	GOT 2 BELIEVE
3 (DTS)	A BEAUTIFUL MIND
4	ESKANDALOSA
5 (SDDS)	WE WERE SOLDIERS

Universal
(Manila) tel 733.2470

1	BATAS NG LANSANGAN

Sampaguita
(Cubao) tel 911.7888

1	BATAS NG LANSANGAN

Dilson
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Dilson	ESKANDALOSA
Lords	ESKANDALOSA
Jennet	

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Mandaluyong
tel 533.3851 / 533.3856

1	BATAS NG LANSANGAN
2	GOT 2 BELIEVE
3	WE WERE SOLDIERS

Prima
(Pasig) tel 641.1215

3	RESERVE

Isetann Cinerama Complex Recto
SUPER CINERAMA
tel 733.4238

1 (DOLBY)	BATAS NG LANSANGAN
2	WE WERE SOLDIERS
3	NOT ANOTHER TEEN MOVIE
4	GOT 2 BELIEVE
5	ESKANDALOSA

New Divisoria Mall
DIVISORIA CINEMA
tel 244.4619

1	RESERVE
2	RESERVE
3	RESERVE
4	RESERVE
5	RESERVE
6	RESERVE

FRC Cinema
Talaba Bacoor Cavite

1	BATAS NG LANSANGAN
2	BLACK HAWK DOWN

Berma
tel 879.2029

1	BATAS NG LANSANGAN
2	GOT 2 BELIEVE

CitiMall
(Parañaque) tel 820.7269

1	RESERVE
2	RESERVE

CINEMA 2000

Cinema 2000 Target Mall
(Sta. Rosa Laguna)
tel (049) 534.2185 / 534.2198

1	GOT 2 BELIEVE
2	BATAS NG LANSANGAN
3 (DTS)	A BEAUTIFUL MIND

Cinema 2000 Waltermart
(Calamba) tel (049) 545.7383

1	NOT ANOTHER TEEN MOVIE
2 (DTS)	GOT 2 BELIEVE
3 (DOLBY)	BEAUTIFUL MIND
4	BATAS NG LANSANGAN

Cinema 2000 Pavilion Mall
(Biñan) tel (049) 411.1146

1	GOT 2 BELIEVE
2 (DOLBY)	A BEAUTIFUL MIND
3 (DTS)	NOT ANOTHER TEEN MOVIE
4	BATAS NG LANSANGAN

Cinema 2000 Cinemagix
(Urdaneta) tel(075) 568.6771

1	BATAS NG LANSANGAN
2	GOT 2 BELIEVE
3	SOON TO OPEN
4	SOON TO OPEN

Cinema 2000 MetroTown
(Tarlac) tel(045) 982.1729

1	GOT 2 BELIEVE
2	BATAS NG LANSANGAN
3 (DOLBY)	MOTHMAN PROPHECIES
4 (DTS)	COLLATERAL DAMAGE

Lianas Cinema
(Alabang) tel 850.1276

1 (SDDS)	BATAS NG LANSANGAN
2	ESKANDALOSA
3	GOT 2 BELIEVE
4 (DTS)	WE WERE SOLDIERS

Lianas MovieCity
(Calamba) tel (049) 545.7202

1 (DOLBY)	BATAS NG LANSANGAN
2	GOT 2 BELIEVE
3 (DTS)	A BEAUTIFUL MIND
4	NOT ANOTHER TEEN MOVIE
5	MOTHMAN PROPHECIES

Olivarez Tri-Cinema
(Biñan) tel (049) 511.8883

1	BATAS NG LANSANGAN
2	GOT 2 BELIEVE
3	A BEAUTIFUL MIND

Olivarez Los Baños
tel (049) 249-2558

1	A BEAUTIFUL MIND
2	BATAS NG LANSANGAN
3	GOT 2 BELIEVE

Olivarez Tagaytay
tel (046) 413.0311

1	GOT 2 BELIEVE
2	BATAS NG LANSANGAN
3	HALIK SA AKING LUPA

Morales Cinema
(Biñan) tel (049) 511.9736

1	GOT 2 BELIEVE
2	BATAS NG LANSANGAN
3	

Cabuyao
(Laguna City) tel (049) 531.4808

1 (DTS)	GOT 2 BELIEVE
2 (DTS)	BATAS NG LANSANGAN

Fourstep
(Cavite) tel (046) 416.2385

1	

Emperor
(Rosario Cavite) tel (046) 438.1657

1	COLLATERAL DAMAGE
2	GOT 2 BELIEVE
3	BATAS NG LANSANGAN

Fiesta World Mall
(Lipa) tel (043) 981.0790

1	BATAS NG LANSANGAN
2	
3	SHALLOW HAL
4	GOT 2 BELIEVE

Jade Cinema
(Angeles City) tel (045) 887.5001 to 03

1 (DOLBY EX)	SHALLOW HAL
2	GOT 2 BELIEVE
3 (DTS)	A BEAUTIFUL MIND
4	BATAS NG LANSANAGAN

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3	WE WERE SOLDIERS
4	13 GHOSTS
5	BEAUTIFUL MIND
6	NOT ANOTHER TEEN
7	SHALLOW HAL
8	GOT 2 BELIEVE
9	BATAS NG LANSANGAN
10	ALI

Ermita
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1	WE WERE SOLDIERS
2	GOT 2 BELIEVE
3	BATAS NG LANSANGAN
4	13 GHOSTS
5	BEAUTIFUL MIND
6	NOT ANOTHER TEEN
7	WE WERE SOLDIERS

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1	ALI
2	WE WERE SOLDIERS
3	BEAUTIFUL MIND
4	NOT ANOTHER TEEN
5	13 GHOSTS
6	BATAS NG LANSANGAN
7	GOT 2 BELIEVE
8	ESKANDALOSA

Novaliches
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1	WE WERE SOLDIERS
2	WE WERE SOLDIERS
3	GOT BELIEVE
4	13 GHOSTS
5	BEAUTIFUL MIND
6	BATAS NG LANSANGAN
7	ESKANDALOSA
8	ALI

Imus
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1	WE WERE SOLDIERS
2	WE WERE SOLDIERS
3	NOT ANOTHER TEEN
4	BEAUTIFUL MIND
5	BATAS NG LANSANGAN
6	GOT 2 BELIEVE

Bacolod
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1	KATE & LEOPOLD
2	GOT 2 BELIEVE
3	THE OTHERS
4	RIDING IN CARS
5	FROM HELL
6	IKAW LAMANG . . .

Iloilo
336- 8077 - 78

1	THE OTHERS
2	SHALLOW HAL
3	MARSHALL DICK
4	RIDING IN CARS
5	GOT 2 BELIEVE
6	RAT RACE

Star Mills-
Sn. Fernando, Pamp.
875- 1927

1	A BEAUTIFUL MIND
2	A BEAUTIFUL MIND
3	SHALLOW HAL
4	SHALLOW HAL
5	BATAS NG LANSANGAN
6	BATAS NG LANSANGAN

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ALI MALL CINEPLEX-3 (DDS)	ALI
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-4 (SDDS)	WE WERE SOLDIERS
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-5 (DTS)	A BEAUTIFUL MIND
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-6 (DOLBY)	NOT ANOTHER TEEN
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-7 (DOLBY)	13 GHOSTS
FARMERS PLAZA-1 (DOLBY)	ESKANDALOSA
FARMERS PLAZA-2 (DOLBY)	WE WERE SOLDIERS
FIESTA CARNIVAL	
NEW FRONTIER	
MANILA	
EASTERN	
MAXIM	CLOSED
MIRAMAR	HUBOG / TOO MUCH FLESH
ODEON	WE WERE SOLDIERS
ODEON-2	BATAS NG LANSANGAN
ROBEN	ESKANDALOSA
TANDEM-1	SEX MEDUSA
TANDEM-2	SEX EDUCATION
TIMES	OTHER SIDE OF LOVE / AMERICAN PIE 2
QUEZON CITY	
ACT-1	SENSUAL ISLAND
ACT-2	KAYA KO PERO MASAKIT
ACT-3	CLOSED
ACT-4	CLOSED
CORONET-2	ORIGINAL SIN
QUEZON-1	ESKANDALOSA
REMAR	ESKANDALOSA
REMAR-2	BATAS NG LANSANGAN
NOVA MALL - NOVALICHES CINEMA	
A	GOT 2 BELIEVE IN MAGIC
B	BATAS NG LANSANGAN
C	-ISKANDALOSA
MANDALUYONG CITY	
SHANGRI-LA PLAZA MALL	635-20-79 / 633-78-51 TO 70
CINEMA-1	WE WERE SOLDIERS
CINEMA-2	EIGA SAI FILM FESTIVAL
CAINTA RIZAL	
STA. LUCIA EAST	(681-5401 TO 19)
CINEMA-1	BATAS NG LANSANGAN
CINEMA-2	ESKANDALOSA
CINEMA-3	COLLATERAL DAMAGE
CINEMA-4 (DOLBY DIGITAL)	WE WERE SOLDIERS
CINEMA-5 (DTS)	ALI
CINEMA-6	GOT 2 BELIEVE
CINEMA-7	HINOG SA PILIT
CINEMA-8	SHALLOW HAL
CINEMA-9 (DTS)	WE WERE SOLDIERS
CINEMA-10 (DOLBY DIGITAL)	A BEAUTIFUL MIND
CINEMA-11 (SDDS)	NOT ANOTHER TEEN MOVIE
CINEMA-12	13 GHOSTS
CINEMA-14	GOT 2 BELIEVE
CINEMA-15	BATAS NG LANSANGAN
LORES	
CINEMA-2	CLOSED
CINEMA-3	CLOSED
POWER PLANT CINEMA	
CINEMA-1	RAT RACE
CINEMA-2	13 GHOST
CINEMA-3	SHALLOW HAL
CINEMA-4	MOTHMAN PROPHECIES
CINEMA-5	GOT 2 BELIEVE
CINEMA-6	ALI
UNIWIDE METROMALL	
(LAS PINAS)	
CINEMA-1	
CINEMA-2	
CINEMA-4	
UNIWIDE COASTAL MALL	
(PARANAQUE)	
CINEMA-1	ALIPIN NG TUKSO
CINEMA-2	THE OTHER SIDE OF LOVE
CINEMA-4	ALAMID

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ALI - P 13 12:50, 3:50, 6:50, 9:50	GOT 2 BELIEVE - GP 12:45, 3:00, 5:15, 7:30, 9:45	WE WERE SOLDIERS - P 13 11:00, 1:40, 4:25, 7:10, 10:00
NOT ANOTHER TEEN MOVIE - R 18 12:45, 2:55, 5:05, 7:15, 9:30	SHALLOW HAL - P 13 12:30, 2:50, 5:10, 7:30, 9:50	A BEAUTIFUL MIND - P13 11:00, 1:50, 4:40, 7:30, 10:20

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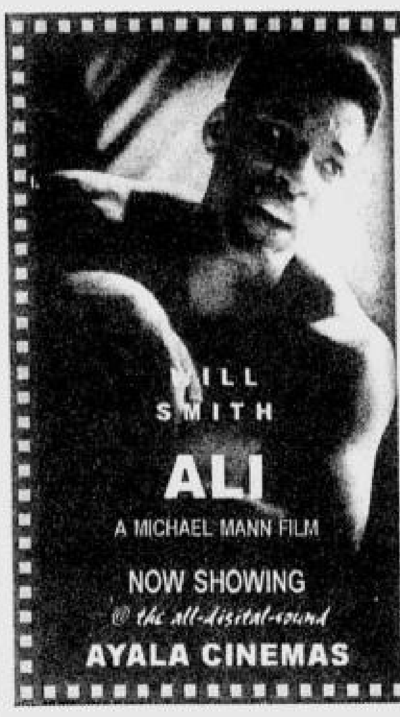

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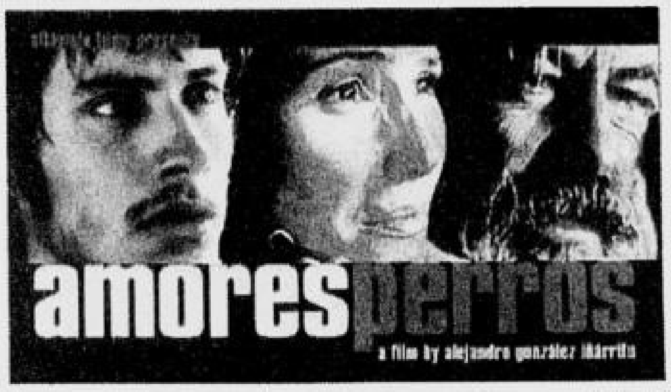
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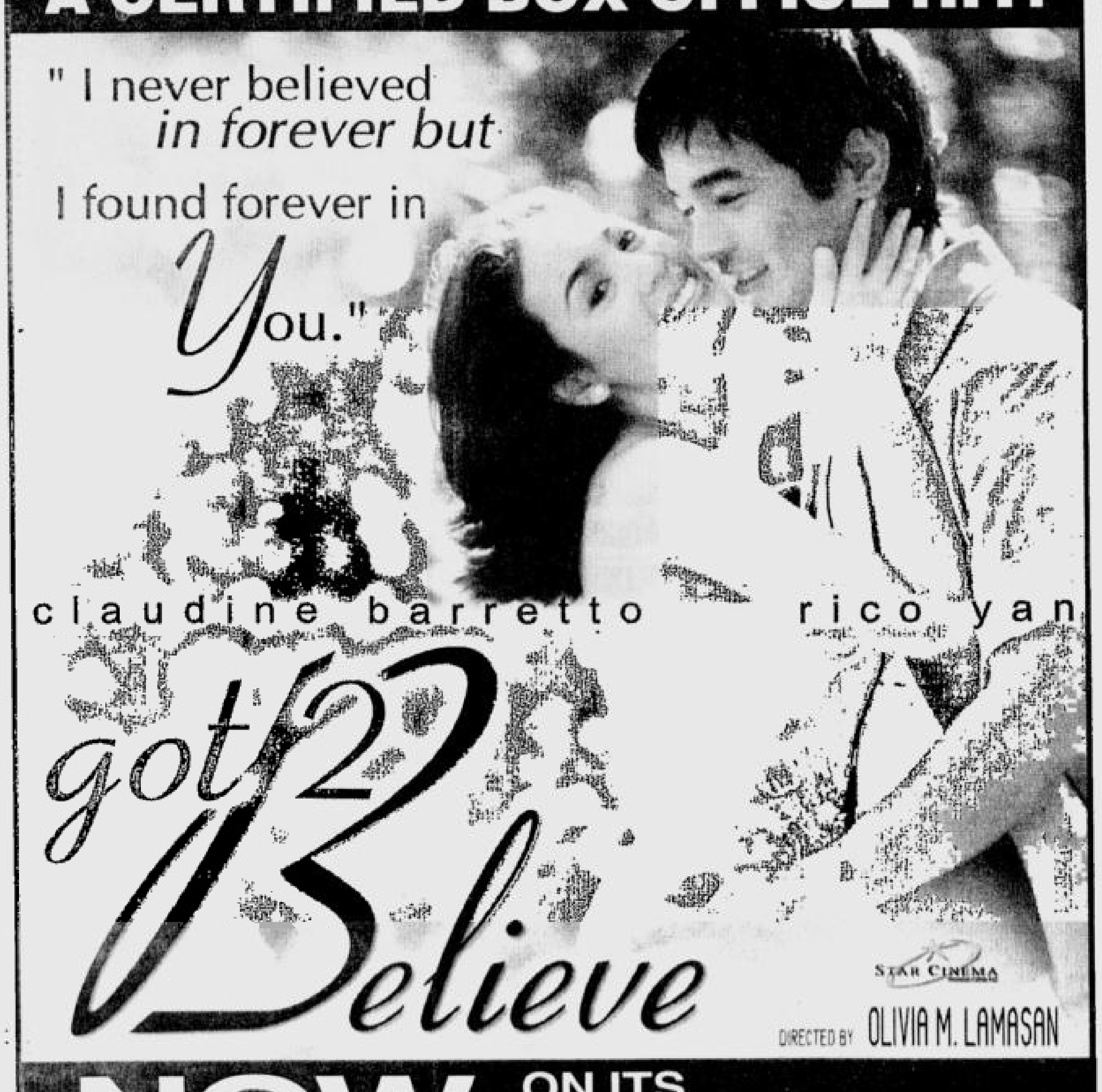
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ENTERTAINMENT

Editor **Louie C. Camino**

WEST, EAST, north, or south of the globe, Westlife is big.

WESTLIFE

From sleepy Irish town to fame in all zones

By Leah Salterio

WESTLIFE continues to prove it deserves winning the honor as Favorite International Act in the First MTV Asia Awards.

Since Westlife stormed the music scene, it has charted nine No. 1 singles, sold more than 12 million albums worldwide and reaped multi-platinum record awards. And to think that Westlife is only three years old.

Westlife is composed of Bryan McFadden, Shane Filan, Kian Egan, Mark Feehily and Nicky Byrne. The group is the latest export from Ireland, also home to other world-famous artists like U2, Cranberries, The Corrs and Boyzone. Ronan Keating, the Boyzone lead singer, is one of Westlife's managers.

Shane, Kian and Mark, who come from the sleepy town of Sligo, two hours west of Dublin (where Bryan and Nicky come from), were with a band called IOU that performed in local theater productions. They got a break when they sang in a children's hospital and their performance was featured on a local TV show. Unknown to them, Boyzone manager Louis Walsh was watching the performance and what he saw apparently excited him.

Walsh asked the boys to do a support act when the Backstreet Boys played in Dublin, but he initially didn't want to manage them. He changed his mind when he saw them on stage.

IOU dropped three of its members and took in Nicky and Bryan to form Westside. But when they found out that other bands and merchandising companies in the United States were using the same name, they changed theirs to Westlife.

"Swear It Again," the carrier single of their eponymous debut, album took off in the UK and the success of Westlife was sealed.

In an interview with Westlife in Singapore, where they attended the recent MTV Asia Awards, the boys said they never imagined getting this far after they started singing in 1999.

"We're from Sligo in west Ireland which only has a population of 50,000 people," Mark said. "It's a very small place. This is an amazing thing to happen to us."

Fast

"Three years ago, none of us would ever have dared to dream of signing up with a major recording label, with two great managers behind us," Nicky says. "We feel we have achieved so much in so short a time. We've been very lucky to work with brilliant people."

"Amazing" was how Kian described their success. "It's been very fast and more than we can even dream of."

Westlife's debut album, distributed by BMG Records Pilipinas, spawned the hits "Swear It Again," "If I Let You Go," "Fool Again," "Forever," "Flying Without Wings," and the revival tracks "More Than Words" by Extremes, "I Have a Dream" by Abba and "Seasons in the Sun" by Terry Jacks.

In Westlife's "Coast to Coast" album, they worked with pop diva Mariah Carey, who enlisted them to sing on the cover of "Against All Odds." The CD went on to become a bestseller with other tracks like "What Makes a Man," "My Love" and the revival of Billy Joel's "Uptown Girl," the group's biggest hit single to date.

After a seven-month hiatus from the music charts, Westlife took off again last December with the release of their third album, "World of Our Own." The tracks were recorded in London and Dublin.

Although their third musical outing carries original songs, Westlife stuck to the basic pop love tunes that catapulted them to music stardom in the first place.

"The quality of these songs is better than the last two albums put together," Kian noted.

Wide appeal

"We're very successful in what we do, we're very happy with what we do, and I think our music appeals to a lot of people, young and old," Shane said.

For the music video of the title track, "World of Our Own," they dressed up as characters from Quentin Tarantino's gangster flick, "Reservoir Dogs." They looked great in suits and loved their bad-boy look. They raced around in a Hummer jeep chased by cops and even added Dobermans to complete the video.

"Releasing an album is always an adventure for all of us," Bryan granted.

The second single culled from "World of Our Own" is "Queen of My Heart" which, according to Bryan, "represents a new mark in classic song-making, a Rod Stewart meets Wings landscape of sound, a slow building, big-chorused, bagpipe wielding gauntlet thrown down all comers."

Also included in the new release is Shane's version of Sarah McLachlan's "Angel."

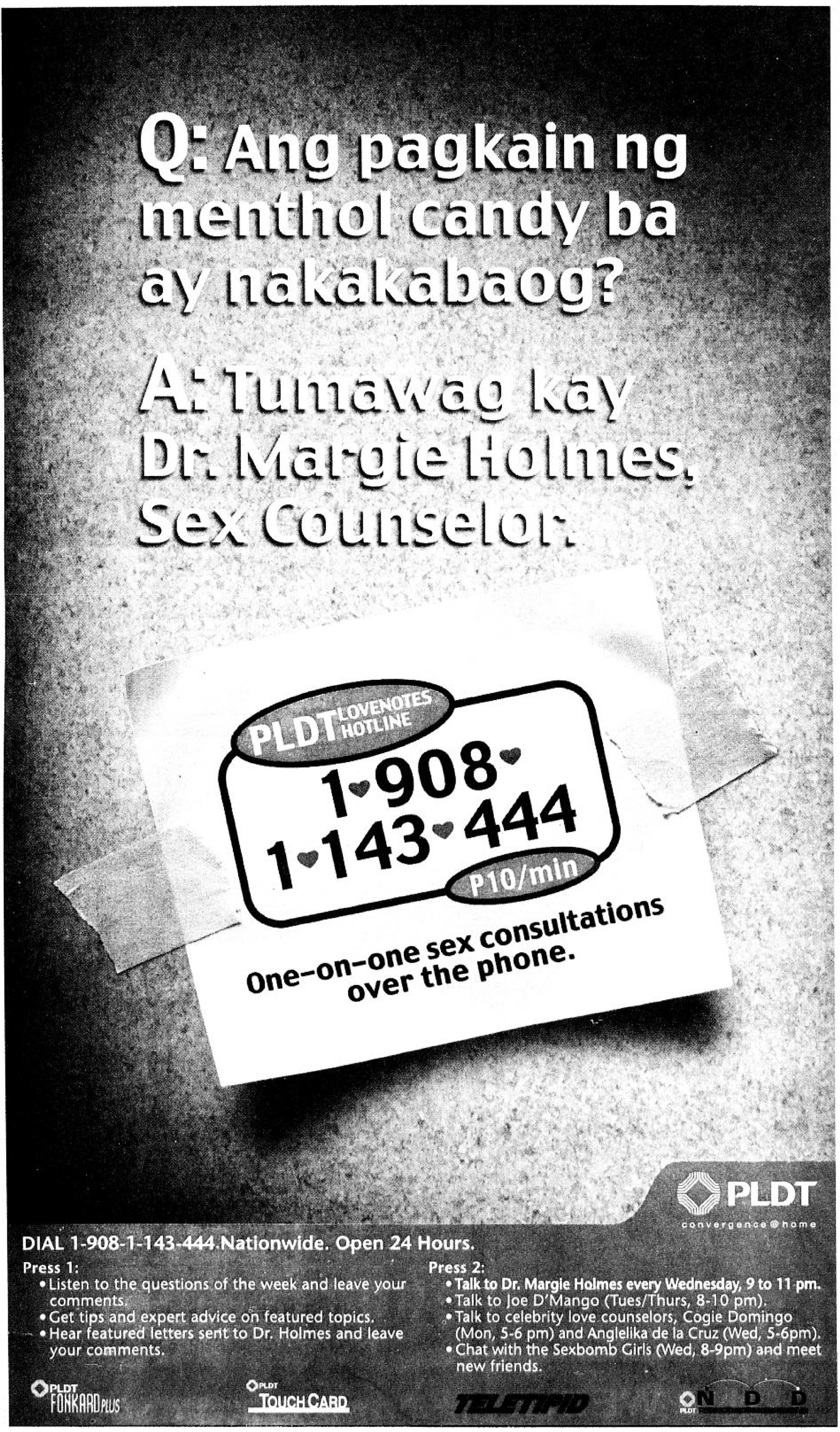
Memorable

"We don't really try to be different, but when you hear our songs, you'll know it's us," Kian said. "We have our own kind of music and we want to be known for that."

Westlife has visited the Philippines twice, for promo tours and major concerts at the Folk Arts Theater and at the Araneta Coliseum. Their second visit in May last year was even more memorable, especially for Mark since he celebrated his 21st birthday here.

"The people are all very warm," Mark said. "(Manila) is always a nice place to visit."

Of Westlife's continuing success, Mark said, "We just want to stick together. We're like brothers. We look after each other. Our success has been great so far and we want more success as we go on."



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BUSINESS

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February inflation hits 2-yr low of 3.4%

INDICATORS

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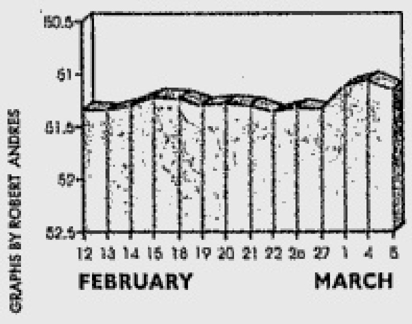
PESO - DOLLAR



GRAPHS BY ROBERT ANDRES

PESO-DOLLAR RATE

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As of 5 p.m., March 5, 2002

¥132.38 = $1

As of 5 p.m., March 5, 2002

GOLD: $297.30/297.80

per ounce Hong Kong, March 5, 2002

STOCK MARKET

Shares fall

SHARE prices fell marginally yesterday as the market corrected after a five-day rally, analysts said.

The Philippine Stock Exchange composite index dropped 1.11 points or 0.1 percent to close at 1,428.24.

"The market is just taking a breather since we've been up for five days," said Astro del Castillo of the Association of Securities Analysts of the Philippines.

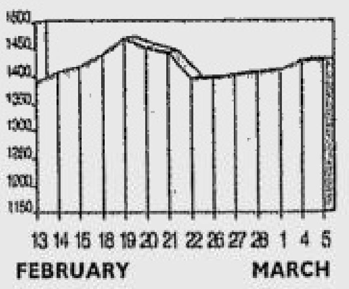
"But given the latest economic numbers, investors don't want to sell out their positions."

Analysts said the market's weak closing was nothing to worry about.

"I guess this is just a mini-glitch, nothing to be worried about," said Lawrence de Leon of KGI Securities Inc. "We're still very positive on the market," he added.

Turnover rose to 1.775 billion shares but value fell to P693 million from 664 million shares worth P752 million on the previous trading day. *AFP*

PSE COMPOSITE INDEX



(See stock market report on Page B4)

By Doris C. Dumlao

THE INFLATION rate dropped to a two-year low of 3.4 percent in February as prices of basic goods like food and utility continued to stabilize alongside the improving economic outlook for the year.

This compares with an inflation rate of 3.4 percent a year earlier and 3.8 percent in the previous month.

The lower-than-expected inflation was a welcome surprise even for government economic managers who were expecting a rate of 3.9 percent for January.

The average inflation rate for the first two months of the year now stood at 3.6 percent.

The National Statistics Office yesterday reported a softening of the index for all commodity groups except for clothing, whose inflation rate remained at 2.8 percent.

The index for food, beverage and clothing eased to 1.7 percent in February from 1.8 percent in January; housing and repairs, 5.5 percent from 6.5 percent; fuel, light and water, 9 percent from 10.8 percent; services, 5.1 percent from 5.7 percent; and miscellaneous items, 2.3 percent from 2.7 percent.

The inflation for food alone dipped to 1.5 percent last month from 1.6 percent in January as the decline in the prices of corn, fruits and vegetables offset the uptick in the price of rice, eggs and fish. Meanwhile, there was a slower increase in the prices of cereal preparations, dairy products, meat and miscellaneous foods.

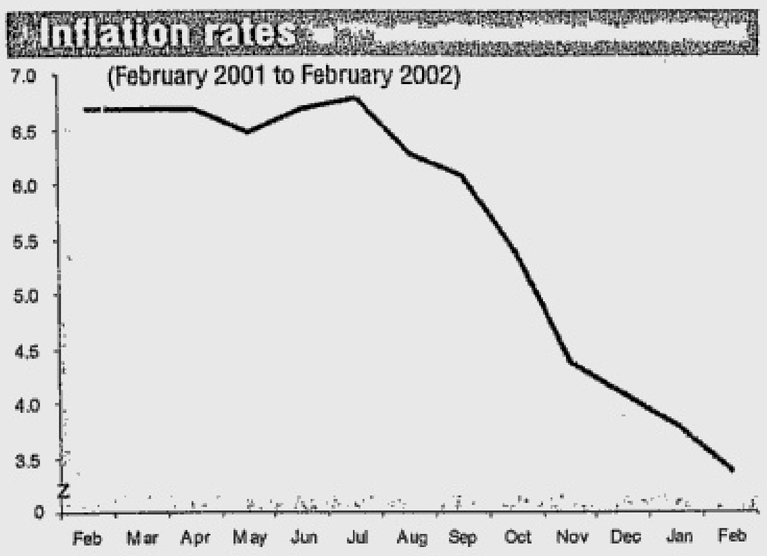
By region, the inflation rate in Metro Manila slowed down to 4.6 percent from 5.2 percent while the index for areas outside the National Capital Region declined to 2.8 percent from 5.2 percent.

Month-on-month inflation likewise posted a contraction of 0.2 percent from a slight expansion of 0.4 percent in January due to a significant reduction in food prices, particularly rice, fish, fruits, vegetables and meat. The drop in the prices of liquefied petroleum gas (LPG) and kerosene along with the lower rate for electricity consumption in the NCR also contributed to the downtrend.

With the sharp slowdown in inflation owing to stable production and a downtrend in interest rates, Economic Planning Secre-

FEBRUARY/ B6

Inflation rates



Analysts sound off upbeat Asian growth outlook

REGIONAL economists are drumming up more optimistic growth outlooks for Asia, spurred by recent positive data from the region and the United States.

ING Barings, Credit Suisse First Boston, JP Morgan Chase and Deutsche Bank have ditched last year's cautious optimism, and revised upwards growth forecasts around the region because of improving export numbers, fewer inventory stockpiles, rising consumer confidence, and increased short-term investment flows.

And now analysts are saying better-than-expected US manufacturing data issued on Friday could pave the way for further positive revisions.

"Friday's data does have an immediate repercussion as far as growth expectations for the region, and that's clearly being seen in the reaction in the equity and currency markets," said Claudio Piron, strategist at Standard Chartered Bank in Singapore.

"So long as the stock market holds up, and we don't get bad disclosures from US companies ahead of the April earnings season, we should see more recovery in the region," he said.

The Institute for Supply Management reported on Friday the US manufacturing sector, hard hit by last year's slowdown, was showing signs of life.

The group's Purchasing Managers Index climbed to 54.7 in February from 49.9 in January, signaling the first expansion in the

ANALYSTS/ B6

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BSP rate cut seen due to low inflation

By Clarissa S. Batino

A MUCH lower inflation rate in February has given the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas some room for another modest cut in its overnight rates in the next two months.

"But whether we should do it in March or in April, we will find out in our future (Monetary Board) discussions," BSP Governor Rafael Buenaventura said yesterday.

If ever, the central bank chief said the next cut would be modest, hinting that it would be in the level of a quarter-of-a-percentage point similar to its last two rate cuts.

The 3.4-percent inflation rate in February, the lowest in two years, was also much lower than the 3.9-percent estimate of the central bank for the month.

With the favorable inflation rate, Buenaventura said the plan of the economic managers to revise the target to a range of 4.5 to 5.5 percent from an original target of 5 to 6 percent might push through.

He admitted that once the inflation target was revised, the policy-making Monetary Board would have less flexibility to ease overnight rates.

"This re-affirms that inflation is under control and this gives us confidence that a lower inflation target is possible," the BSP chief said.

A day before the February inflation was announced, Buenaventura appeared to favor keeping the BSP policy rates steady for most part of the year at 7.25 percent for overnight borrowing and 9.5 percent for overnight lending.

He explained that while the lower inflation numbers would be a positive factor to be considered by the Monetary Board in deciding whether or not to continue easing rates, another issue was whether the US Federal Reserve would still cut interest rates in its meeting this month.

Bank loans down 3.6% in January

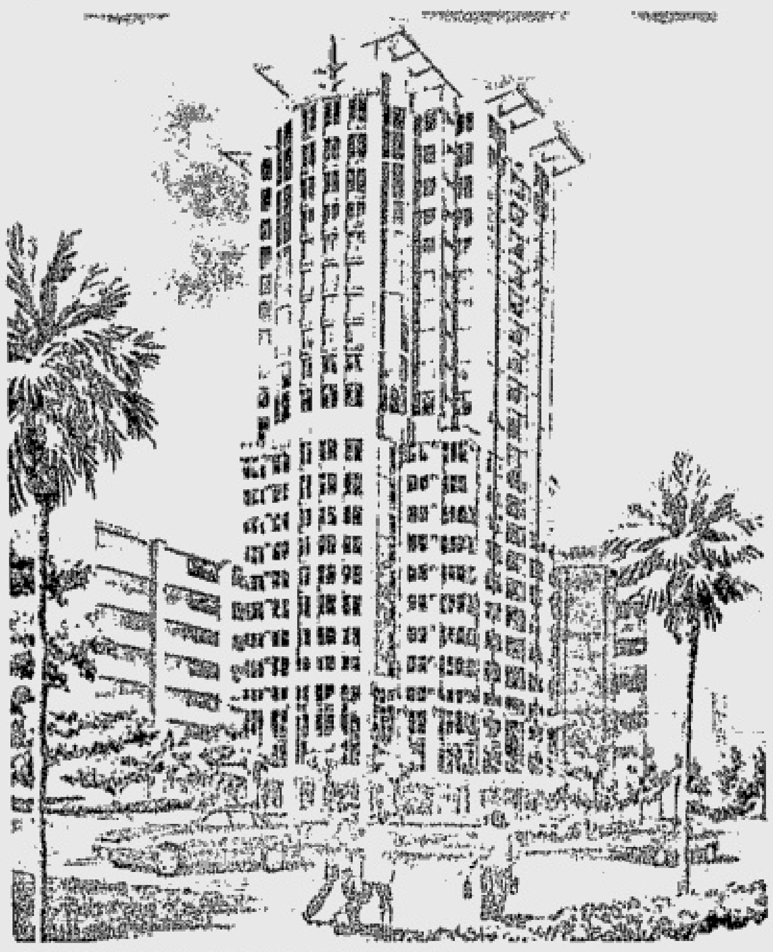
THE VOLUME of loans made by commercial banks in January fell 3.6 percent year-on-year, reflecting weak demand from the corporate sector and banks' own cautious lending stance, the Bangko Sentral said.

It added that credit extended to the private sector in January was down 4.8 percent year-on-year, though it rose 8.1 for the public sector.

Earlier, the central bank had announced that domestic liquidity growth, or M3, in January had slowed to 5.3 percent, from 6.8 percent in December

"The still-weak global economy has restrained business expansion plans of the private sector and thus the continued low credit demand," the central bank said, adding: "Moreover the presence of spare capacity in the manufacturing sector limited corporates' need for additional credits."

Average capacity utilization in December stood at 76.9 percent, little changed from 76.6 percent in November, the bank said.



G&W LAUNCHES NEW CONDO

G&W Development Consultants and Fort Bonifacio Development Corp. will jointly introduce Penhurst Parkplace, a 22-story condominium in the Bonifacio Global City. Through a new scheme, G&W said it has made it possible to own a 3-bedroom corner unit for only P36,200 per sq.m. up to a maximum of P39,980.00 per sq.m.—or P3.95 million to P4.35 million each. Gilbert Yu, chair of G&W, said the low price is intended to pump prime the recovery of the middle-market segment. He said the invitation-only launch will be held this Friday at the Fort Bonifacio Auditorium A.

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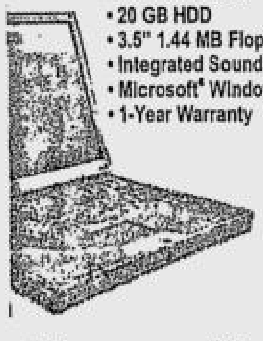

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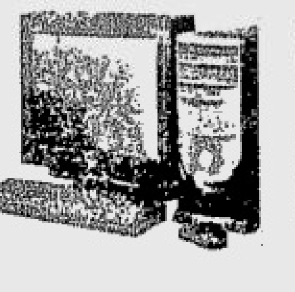

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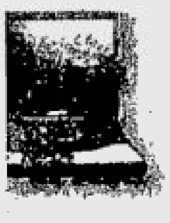

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Group affirms integrity of PEACe bond bidding

THOSE who had the most to lose and knew the most about the PEACe bonds have issued a statement vouching for the integrity of the auction process for government securities.

The Money Market Association of the Philippines (MART) said that "it did not receive any complaint" from its members concerning the auction of the PEACe bonds and that it "firmly stands by the integrity of the government securities auction process."

MART is an industry-wide association of financial traders, comprising 65 financial institutions, who are "knowledgeable in various treasury products, among them, the zero coupon bonds for auction on Oct. 16, 2001."

Total tenders from these GSEDs reached a face value of P137 billion, with the treasury bureau accepting bids totaling P35 billion at a yield of 12.75 percent.

The PEACe bonds have been in the center of a controversy, based on allegations that a nongovernment organization (NGO) profited from the re-sale of the bond. However, during congressional hearings, it was shown that a total of 15 dealers participated in the auction and that none protested the manner in which it was conducted.

Aguirres: Wrath of Bob

COCKTALES

Victor C. Agustin

STUNG by his younger siblings' legal challenge over his role as administrator of the multibillion-peso Aguirre estate, Banco Filipino vice chair Albert "Bobby" Aguirre has now moved to completely cut off the financial support of brother Adolfo ("Ady") and sister Ana Maria ("Nanette").

Bobby is now asking the Pasay Regional Trial Court to stop even the P215,000 a month Ady has been receiving as "advances" from the family corporations.

Nanette, on the other hand, has not been getting any money from the Aguirre firms since their father, Tomas Aguirre, died in 1996, claiming she had been ousted from the family corporations by Bobby as a result of her questioning Bobby's administratorship.

Pending the liquidation of their father's estate, a court case that could drag on for decades, both Ady and Nanette have asked the Pasay court that they instead be granted "allowances," whose amounts shall be charged against their respective inheritance.

Ady has even asked that the allowance be increased to P500,000 a month, saying he and his children are "entitled to a way of life in accordance with their stature."

But Bobby's lawyers are adamant that the younger Aguirres are not entitled to any support at all.

"The fact that the recipients are of age, gainfully employed or married has never been considered as a criterion by law and jurisprudence in considering the grant of support pending liquidation of the estate," Bobby's lawyers Homobono Adaza and Carmelo Mendoza told Judge Eleuterio Guerrero.

At best, the heirs are only entitled to an allowance "necessary for subsistence," Bobby's lawyers said. If we go by this criteria, then Nanette and Ady would have to make do with P6,958 a month each, based on the government-pegged daily cost of living for a Filipino family of six, countered their lawyers Rowena Garcia-Flores and Jose Martin Tensuan.

The hearing continues.

Lobbying for lobby money

FORMER New York Congressman Stephen Solarz, now a lobbyist for India and Turkey, is trying to get a piece of the Philippine lobby pie now being cornered by Burson-Marsteller.

The arch Marcos critic has been quietly flying in and out of the Philippines, the most recent having accompanied newly designated US Ambassador Francis Ricciardone in the trans-Pacific flight to Manila, according to the grapevine.

Solarz, who has strong links with the Cory and Ramos camps, flew to Manila from his McLean, Virginia, home right after Edsa II, snagging an audience with newly installed President Macapagal-Arroyo on Jan. 29, 2001.

Solarz was at that time accompanied by New Yörk-based fund manager Lilia Clemente.

No basis for conversion

IT looks like Malacañang failed to read the BCDA charter when it appointed a new chair as well as a new president.

Under the BCDA Act, specifically Section 9a, the chair and the president of the Bases Conversion Development Authority must be one and the same person.

As you may have read in the papers, Malacañang appointed ex-DPWH director, now Ilocos Sur National High School Global Foundation Inc. president Florencio Padernal as BCDA chair alongside former CDC president Rufo Colayco as president/CEO.

Though they had not known each other before, Colayco and Padernal have apparently reached a modus vivendi, with Padernal, despite his titular title, being given operational jurisdiction over Club John Hay and Poro Point.

Heard through the grapevine

HAVING lost the battle in the Supreme Court, the group of former PSE president Jose Luis Yulo and his German partners are now funding the anti-incinerator, anti-Jancom lobby being waged in the media and Congress.

Yulo took over the oppositors' group after a certain "Ging" fell out of power along with the fall of the Erap administration.

Jancom, on the other hand, has hired the services of ex-Erap buddy, now GMA booster Jose Manuel Romualdez of Bozell/BSMG to counter the media attacks.

(Cocktales may be reached by e-mail at cocktales_pdi@yahoo.com or at cocktales_pdi@hotmail.com.)

After 45 years, Eizmendi retires from San Miguel

By Doris C. Dumlao

EIZMENDI

SAN Miguel Corp. yesterday announced the retirement of its president and chief operating officer Francisco Eizmendi after 45 years of service in the food and beverage giant.

SMC did not immediately announce a replacement for Eizmendi but company officials said a new president could be named in the next few days.

A statement from SMC said Eizmendi would stay on as a consultant under the office of company chair Eduardo "Danding" Cojuangco Jr.

Eizmendi became president of SMC in 1987 after serving as senior executive vice president and COO.

He joined SMC as a quality control engineer in 1956 right after graduating with a degree in chemical engineering from the University of Santo Tomas. He was among the pioneers in methods analysis in SMC, eventually holding managerial positions in the company's corporate systems and methods analysis and control from 1965 to 1969.

Eizmendi also served as division manager of SMC's management services after serving successive stints as director of data processing services, management information and systems and the senior management committee.

In a separate statement, SMC also clarified that the proposal that its vice chair Ramon Ang received from the Concepcion family was for the possible sale of Swift Food Corp., not the family's majority stake in RFM Corp.

In the statement, it said it was thus considering Swift as among its potential acquisition targets.

"As part of the continuing corporate planning process, the company evaluates possible businesses for acquisitions, strategic alliances or joint ventures, in the Philippines or abroad," SMC said.

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Mon. Mar 18, at 12pm & 7pm
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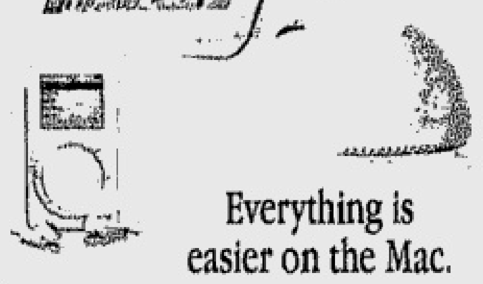

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Opening Program

8:00 - 9:00 am	Registration
9:00 - 9:15 am	Welcome Remarks
9:15 - 9:45 am	Keynote Address: Hon. Cong. Teodoro "Teddy Boy" L. Locsin, Jr.
9:45 - 10:15 am	Mac and Myths
10:15 - 11:00 am	Customer Testimony by Mr. David Guerrero *Chairman and Executive Creative Director - BBDO Guerrero Ortega*
11:00 - 11:30 am	Connectivity Challenge
11:30 - 12:45 pm	Lunch/Registration for Seminar Program

Seminar Program

	Video and Animation	Print & Photography	Digital Lifestyle
12:45 - 1:45 pm	Quicktime Virtual Reality	The Digital Synergy: A Photographer's Experience	Home Movies and DVDs with iMovie and iDVD
1:45 - 2:45 pm	Project M - Softmagic Publishing Solutions for Mac OSX		Music and Images with iTunes and iPhoto
2:45 - 3:45 pm	Final Cut Pro 3	Adobe Print and Web Solutions	Digidesign/Home Studio Music Solution
3:45 - 4:45 pm	3D animation with Maya		Mac Basics
5:15 - 5:30 pm	Closing Remarks and Lucky Draw		

Seminar Program

	Education	Business Solutions A	Business Solutions B
12:45 - 1:45 pm	Richmedia, Internet & Wireless Technology in Today's Classroom	MYOB	OSX Server
1:45 - 2:45 pm	Macintosh in Creative Arts	Quicktime Media Technologies	Domino Everyplace The Power of M-Business
2:45 - 3:45 pm	Mac-PC Connectivity	Discover ArchiCad	Creating Dynamic Website with Filemaker Pro
3:45 - 4:45 pm	Cross Platform: Font and File Management	4 D: Databases and Web Solutions	The New Microsoft: Office Mac v. X
5:15 - 5:30 pm	Closing Remarks and Lucky Draw		

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Pawnshop chain listing on April 10

By Doris C. Dumlao

THE TAMBUNTING family's pawnshop chain TFS Inc. is set to list on the small and medium enterprise (SME) board of the Philippine Stock Exchange on April 10, the Philippine Stock Exchange announced yesterday.

The company will be the second company to list on the SME board since the third board of the local stock exchange was inaugurated last year with the listing of software service firm SQL Wizard Inc.

The PSE announced that the offering of TFS' 30 million new unclassified common shares or 30 percent of its post-IPO shares at a price of P1.05 per share would start on March 18 and end on March 22 this year.

TFS had tapped BV Partners Inc. as financial adviser and Keppel IVI Investments Inc. as issue manager.

Currently, the company has an authorized capital stock of 100 million common shares with a par value of P1 per share, of which 70 million are issued and outstanding.

TFS expects to raise gross proceeds of P31.5 million from the offer and a net of P26.78 million after deducting underwriting fees and other expenses. Proceeds will be used to fund the company's network expansion plans.

The Tambunting pawnshop network was founded in 1906 in Manila by the late Ildefonso Tan Bunting under the name "Casa Agencia de Empeños de Ildefonso Tan Bunting."

In 1986, some Tambunting family members began establishing pawnshop branches under other names to increase market share, using trade names such as Federal Pawnshop, Unlad Pawnshop and First Pawnshop. By 1992, the network has expanded to 300 branches.

The family later on decided to divide equally the network of Tambunting pawnshops among its members. The practice of using other trade names was discontinued.

DISCLOSURES

JOLLIBEE Foods Corp. said that after 12.139 million shares were exercised and paid for under the company's stock option plan, total treasury shares allotted for the plan reached 20.3 million shares.

* * *

INTERNATIONAL Container Terminal Services Inc. increased its number of directors from eight to nine to allow an independent director to be elected in the board. Also the company shall merge with **ICX Corp.**, manager and operator of rail-serviced container depot in Laguna, with ICTSI as surviving entity.

* * *

METROPOLITAN Bank & Trust Co. will increase its number of directors from 11 to 15. The par value of its common shares will also be reduced from P100 to P20 per share while the number of its common shares will be increased from 500 million to 2.5 billion. Stockholders are also requested to surrender their stock certificates to Metrobank's trust banking group and have these replaced.

Compiled by Maricar D. Tolosa, PDI Research

PHILIPPINE STOCK EXCHANGE

(As of Tuesday, March 05, 2002)

STOCKS	OPEN	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE	VOLUME
BANKS & FINANCIAL SERVICES					
BANKS					
Asiatrust Dev. Bank Inc.	5.3	5.3	5.3	5.3	73,000
Bank of the Phil. Islands	69	69.5	68.5	69.5	93,800
China Banking Corp.	585	590	585	590	1,790
Chinatrust Comm. Bank	17.5	17.5	17.5	17.5	1,000
Citystate Savings Bank	14.25	14.25	14.25	14.25	3,000
Equitable PCI Bank Inc.	32.5	33.5	32.5	33	1,913,700
First E-Bank Corp.	1.98	2.02	1.98	2.02	10,000
Metropolitan Bank & Trust	212	214	211	213	115,670
Philippine National Bank	66	66	63	65	4,200
Phil. Savings Bank	29	29	29	29	100
Rizal Comm. Banking Corp.	13	13	13	13	7,600
Security Bank Corp.	19.25	19.25	19.25	19.25	7,100
Union Bank of the Phil.	20.5	21.25	20.5	21	152,700
FINANCIAL SERVICE					
Bankard Inc.	1.3	1.3	1.3	1.3	89,000
Filipino Fund Inc.	0.37	0.37	0.37	0.37	210,000
Manulife Financial Corp.	1350	1385	1350	1385	4,670
Pci Leasing & Fin. Inc.	0.82	0.82	0.82	0.82	10,000
Sun Life Financial Serv.	1075	1080	1075	1080	1,650
COMMERCIAL & INDUSTRIAL					
COMMUNICATION					
ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp.	33	33	32.5	33	349,400
Diversified Fin. Network	3.9	3.9	3.9	3.9	1,000
Digital Telecom Phils. Inc.	0.71	0.76	0.71	0.73	15,110,000
Globe Telecom Inc.	805	805	800	800	48,920
Island Info and Tech Inc.	0.0675	0.0675	0.06	0.0625	41,700,000
Manila Bulletin Pub. Corp.	3	3	3	3	1,000
Piltel	0.51	0.53	0.5	0.5	13,700,000
Phil. Long Dis Tel Co.	500	505	500	505	68,640
Ivantage Corp.	0.56	0.56	0.56	0.56	40,000
Philweb.Com Inc.	0.022	0.023	0.021	0.022	198,600,000
POWER & ENERGY					
Manila Electric Co. A	33	33	32	32	418,000
Manila Electric Co. B	50	50	47	48.5	2,697,300
Petron Corp.	1.94	1.94	1.9	1.9	5,059,000
Trans-Asia Oil and Energy	0.91	0.91	0.91	0.91	130,000
TRANSPORTATION SERVICES					
Asian Terminals Inc.	1.14	1.14	1.14	1.14	10,000
Int'l Container Term'l Sv	2.75	2.75	2.65	2.7	9,517,000
Keppel Phils. Marine Inc.	0.39	0.4	0.39	0.4	700,000
Lorenzo Shipping Corp.	0.33	0.33	0.33	0.33	10,000
CONSTRUCTION & OTHER RELATED PRODUCTS					
Engineering Equip. Inc.	0.33	0.33	0.33	0.33	500,000
Republic Glass Hldg. Corp.	1.5	1.54	1.5	1.54	14,000
FOOD, BEVERAGES & TOBACCO					
Alaska Milk Corp.	2.14	2.14	2.14	2.14	30,000
Jollibee Foods Corp.	13.5	13.5	13.25	13.5	83,500
La Tondeña Distillers Inc.	24	24	24	24	206,000
RFM Corp.	1.52	1.54	1.48	1.48	2,418,000
Swift Food Inc.	1.2	1.8	1.2	1.32	75,000
San Miguel Corp. A	48.5	48.5	48	48.5	104,800
San Miguel Corp. B	66	66	65.5	66	121,200
HOLDING FIRMS					
Ayala Corp.	7	7.1	6.8	6.9	2,421,000
Aboitiz Equity Ventures	2.12	2.12	2.06	2.08	432,000
Ajo.Net Holdings Inc.	0.8	0.8	0.79	0.8	590,000
A. Soriano Corp.	0.55	0.55	0.55	0.55	210,000
APC Group Inc.	0.15	0.16	0.145	0.15	5,970,000
Alcorn Gold Res. Corp.	0.007	0.007	0.007	0.007	6,000,000
Anglo Phil Holdings Corp.	0.34	0.35	0.34	0.35	200,000
ATN Holdings Inc.	3	3.25	2.95	3.1	1,077,000
Balabac Resources & Hldgs.	0.22	0.22	0.22	0.22	80,000
Benpres Holdings Corp.	0.85	0.85	0.8	0.82	40,550,000
Crown Equities Inc.	0.31	0.33	0.31	0.31	1,030,000
Southeast Asian Cement	0.08	0.08	0.08	0.08	800,000
DMCI Holdings Inc.	0.32	0.32	0.32	0.32	1,270,000
Ebecom Holdings Inc.	0.12	0.12	0.115	0.115	6,790,000
Fil-Estate Corp.	0.8	0.8	0.8	0.8	100,000
Filinvest Dev. Corp.	1.06	1.08	1.06	1.08	711,000
First Phil Hldgs Corp.	34	34	33.5	33.5	612,100
Forum Pacific Inc.	0.18	0.18	0.18	0.18	120,000
Global Equities Inc.	0.175	0.175	0.165	0.175	3,590,000
House of Investments Inc.	0.35	0.35	0.35	0.35	20,000
Ionics Inc.	8.2	8.2	8	8	182,000
J.G. Summit Holdings Inc.	1.9	1.9	1.88	1.88	227,000
Medco Holdings	0.18	0.18	0.18	0.18	120,000
Megaworld Corp.	0.84	0.86	0.84	0.85	3,480,000
Multitech Inv. Corp.	0.6	0.6	0.6	0.6	100,000
Metro Pacific Corp.	0.33	0.34	0.32	0.32	3,030,000
Music Corp.	0.34	0.34	0.33	0.34	690,000
Roxas Holdings Inc.	0.86	0.86	0.86	0.86	20,000
Tanduay Holdings Inc.	4.1	4.1	4.1	4.1	15,000
Uniwide Holdings Inc.	0.15	0.15	0.15	0.15	100,000
Waterfront Phils. Inc.	0.26	0.3	0.26	0.3	1,070,000
MANUFACTURING, DISTRIBUTION & TRADING					
Corro-Coat Inc.	1.44	1.44	1.44	1.44	8,000
Federal Chemicals Inc.	6.4	6.4	6.4	6.4	20,000
Interphil Labs Inc. A	0.9	0.9	0.9	0.9	50,000
Mabuhay Vinyl Corp.	0.54	0.54	0.53	0.53	50,000
Pryce Corp.	0.1	0.105	0.1	0.105	600,000
SPI Technologies Inc.	14.25	14.5	14.25	14.5	393,600
HOTEL, RECREATION & OTHER SERVICE					
Bello Corp.	0.54	0.54	0.53	0.53	2,390,000
Fairmont Holdings Inc.	0.62	0.62	0.61	0.61	680,000
Leisure & Resorts Corp.	0.39	0.39	0.35	0.35	150,000
Mondragon Intl Phils. Inc.	0.39	0.39	0.36	0.36	460,000
Premiere Ent. Prod. Inc.	0.28	0.28	0.28	0.28	600,000
BONDS, PREFERRED & WARRANTS					
ABS-CBN Hldgs. Corp. (Pdr)	33	33.5	33	33.5	234,200
DMCI Holdings Inc.-Pref.	775	775	775	775	100
Equitable PCI Bank-War	1.74	1.76	1.72	1.72	61,000
Globe Telecom Hldg. (Pdr)	800	800	790	790	630
Jollibee Warrants	13	13	13	13	12,100
Omico Corp. Warrant	0.0016	0.0018	0.0016	0.0016	585,000,000
RFM Corp.-Pref.	4.2	4.2	4.2	4.2	91,000
PLDT (10% Pref) Series W	10.25	10.25	10.25	10.25	1,600
PLDT (10% Pref) Series Z	10.25	10.25	10.25	10.25	1,600
PLDT 10% Pref Series Aa	10.25	10.25	10.25	10.25	1,400
PLDT 10% Pref Series Bb	10	10	10	10	1,000
Philweb.Com Inc.-Warrants	0.0065	0.006	0.0065	0.0065	92,000,000
OTHERS					
Far Eastern University	400	400	400	400	660
PROPERTY					
Ayala Land Inc.	7	7	6.9	7	12,705,000
Cityland Development Corp	3	3	3	3	50,000
Cebu Holdings Inc.	0.44	0.45	0.44	0.44	1,030,000
C & P Homes Inc.	0.3	0.3	0.29	0.29	3,740,000
Cyber Bay Corp.	0.56	0.56	0.53	0.53	7,230,000
Empire East Land Inc.	0.32	0.32	0.32	0.32	2,620,000
Filinvest Land Inc.	2.38	2.42	2.3	2.34	13,412,000
Keppel Phils. Prop. Inc.	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.4	10,000
Fil-Estate Land Inc.	0.45	0.45	0.45	0.45	990,000
MRC Allied Ind. Inc.	0.23	0.23	0.23	0.23	20,000
Philippine Estates Corp.	0.07	0.07	0.07	0.07	100,000
Phil Realty and Holdings	0.09	0.09	0.09	0.09	300,000
SM Development Corp.	1	1	1	1	2,000
SM Prime Holdings Inc.	6.9	6.9	6.8	6.8	4,725,000
Urbancorp Realty Dev. Inc	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	50,000
MINING					
Apex Mining Co. Inc. B	0.33	0.33	0.33	0.33	50,000
Itogon-Suyoc Mines A	0.04	0.04	0.039	0.039	13,100,000
Lepanto Cons Mng. Co. A	0.2	0.205	0.2	0.205	2,440,000
Lepanto Cons. Mng. Co. B	0.205	0.225	0.205	0.225	6,560,000
Omico Corp.	0.005	0.0055	0.0048	0.005	606,000,000
Polar Mines & Dev't Corp.	0.019	0.019	0.019	0.019	5,000,000
Philex Mining Corp. A	0.26	0.26	0.26	0.26	50,000
OIL					
Imperial Res.	0.021	0.021	0.021	0.021	2,000,000
Interport Res. B	0.0046	0.0046	0.0046	0.0046	1,000,000
Oriental Pet. & Min. A	0.0055	0.0055	0.0055	0.0055	2,000,000
Oriental Pet. & Min. B	0.006	0.006	0.0055	0.006	28,000,000
Sinophil Corp.	0.075	0.075	0.075	0.075	3,300,000

	SHARES	VALUE (P)
Banks & Fin Svc	2,698,780	107,518,275.00
Comm'l & Ind'l	1,055,716,950	418,975,500.00
PRO	46,984,000	159,981,160.00
Mining	633,200,000	5,769,000.00
OIL	36,300,000	472,600.00
GRAND TOTALS:	1,774,899,730	692,716,535.00

	AVERAGES	
Banks & Fin Svc	574.46	UP 3.30
Comm'l & Ind'l	1,949.52	DOWN 2.22
PRO	628.78	DOWN 3.62
Mining	1,389.32	UP 10.35
OIL	1.91	DOWN 0.06
All Shares Index	768.71	UP 8.32
Composite	1,428.24	DOWN 1.11

NO. OF ADVANCES: 31; NO. OF DECLINES: 42; NO. OF UNCHANGED: 54; NO. OF TRADED ISSUES: 127; NO. OF TRADES: 3,705

CURRENCIES

March 5, 2002

Country	Unit	Euro Equivalent	Foreign currency in US$	Foreign currency in Peso
United States	Dollar	1.149161	1.000000	51.0600
Japan	Yen	0.008698	0.007569	0.3865
United Kingdom	Pound	1.635601	1.423300	72.6737
Hong Kong	Dollar	0.147345	0.128220	6.5469
Switzerland	Franc	0.676893	0.589032	30.0760
Canada	Dollar	0.722516	0.628733	32.1031
Singapore	Dollar	0.629332	0.547645	27.9628
Australia	Dollar	0.597898	0.520291	26.5661
Bahrain	Dinar	3.048335	2.652661	135.4449
Saudi Arabia	Rial	0.306435	0.266660	13.6157
Brunei	Dollar	0.627614	0.546150	27.8864
Indonesia	Rupiah	0.000114	0.000099	0.0051
Thailand	Baht	0.026376	0.022952	1.1719
UAE	Dirham	0.312875	0.272264	13.9018
Korea	Won	0.000878	0.000764	0.0390
Euro	Euro	1.000000	0.870200	44.4324
Brazil	Real	0.491094	0.427350	21.8205
Denmark	Kroner	0.134523	0.117062	5.9772
India	Rupee	0.023636	0.020568	1.0502
Malaysia	Ringgit	0.302451	0.263193	13.4386
Mexico	New Peso	0.126657	0.110217	5.6277
New Zealand	Dollar	0.489880	0.426294	21.7666
Norway	Kroner	0.130177	0.11328	5.7841
Pakistan	Rupee	0.019169	0.016681	0.8517
South Africa	Rand	0.105186	0.091533	4.6737
Sweden	Kroner	0.110677	0.096311	4.9176
Syria	Pound	0.022401	0.019493	0.9953
Taiwan	NT Dollar	0.032843	0.02858	1.4593
Venezuela	Bolivar	0.001172	0.00102	0.0521

DTI, SBMA on collision course over used cars

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

TRADE Secretary Manuel Roxas II and Subic Bay Metropolitan Authority Chair Felicito Payumo are on a collision course over the importation and sale of used vehicles in the country.

Payumo issued yesterday a statement disputing Roxas' claim that bringing in used vehicles from abroad was "patently illegal."

Payumo said: "The importation of used motor vehicles has been liberalized under the law and executive orders from the President. This means that the importation of used passenger buses, construction equipment, passenger vans and utility equipment are lawful, subject to the safety and environment standards of the Land Transportation Office, Bureau of Import Standards (a unit of the Department of Trade and Industry) and SBMA."

He said the Subic auctions of used vehicles were the subject of a series of congressional hearings that failed to make "any clear determination" that the importation of second-vehicles should be stopped.

Payumo urged Roxas to clarify his statement that the importation was illegal. The SBMA is ready to implement "expeditiously and effectively" any official directive prohibiting these transactions, he said.

Roxas has declared that only three kinds of used vehicles may be brought into the country: automobiles owned by *balikbayans*, special-purpose vehicles such as ambulances and garbage trucks, and second-hand, diesel-powered, 10-seater vans.

Roxas said the trade department was looking to discontinue the importation of used passenger vans to support local assemblers.

Payumo said, however, that used cars being auctioned off in Subic Bay were being sold exclusively to locators of the special economic zone since Malacañang ordered the SBMA to stop selling these vehicles in late 2000.

Payumo defended the Subic auctions, saying these created some 3,000 jobs in the auto repair and conversion business in Olongapo, Bataan and Zambales and generated the bulk of the SBMA's revenue collections over the last three years.

The SBMA began hosting auctions for second-hand vehicles in 1998. The popularity of these auctions have spawned clones in Malinta and Valenzuela, which Roxas has vowed to shut down.

Concepcion says no reason for oil firms to jack up prices this month

CONSUMER welfare advocate Raul Concepcion said yesterday fuel prices should remain where they are this month, as the country's oil firms still had a buffer fund of 31 centavos a liter.

"There should be a hike of 18 centavos per liter in March, but the oil firms owe consumers," Concepcion, chair of the Consumer and Oil Price Watch, said in an interview.

Local oil firms have been hinting of another round of increase in their prices this month, citing rising world crude prices.

Crude prices in the world market rose to an average $19.02 a barrel last month from $18.48 a barrel in January.

The prices of Dubai crude, benchmark for Philippine fuel prices, in particular, rose by about 54 cents a barrel.

Pilipinas Shell Petroleum Corp. said an increase in oil prices by 25 to 30 centavos a liter was likely in the middle of the month to cover for the higher prices.

Pilipinas Shell corporate communications manager Roberto Kanapi said crude prices had gone up substantially and that local prices should follow.

Kanapi, however, said Pilipinas Shell would not decide until the middle of the month, and that it would monitor prices this week.

"If average crude prices keep its present level, there will be no price movements," he said. "But so far, prices have gone up to $20.76 per barrel from the February average of $19."

Concepcion said, however, that apart from the buffer fund, the peso had also been gaining against the dollar.

The peso settled at an average 51.29 to a dollar last month from 51.39 in January, he said.

Ronnel W. Domingo

Japanese lender agrees to help fund $400-M public finance loan

THE JAPAN Bank for International Cooperation has agreed to co-finance a public finance strengthening loan that the government is seeking from the World Bank.

In an interview yesterday, Finance Undersecretary Juanita Amatong said the JBIC's entry would double the size of the loan from $200 million to $400 million.

"I think the JBIC will agree to co-finance the program loan, and the announcement may even be made during the consultative group meeting we will hold next week," Amatong said.

The government is set to hold its annual donor pledging session on March 10 to 12 to solicit soft loan commitments from about 21 multilateral and bilateral agencies, including the World Bank and Asian Development Bank, among others.

Amatong said the government would focus on soliciting pledges to help fund its poverty alleviation and good governance programs.

The country failed to hold a donor pledging session, as the government focused on stabilizing the country's political and economic environment.

In 2000, international donors pledged some $2.6 billion worth of aid for the Philippines, increasing the size of the available funding to $10.3 billion.

Much of the funds raised at that time were meant to finance development projects in Mindanao.

Amatong said the public sector strengthening loan would likely be approved by the World Bank during its board meeting in September.

7-year global bonds draw $3B worth of proposals

THE GOVERNMENT was swamped with offers reaching more than $3 billion for the seven-year global bonds that the Philippines launched the other day.

Government officials said, however, it would cap the borrowing to no more than $1 billion based on the registration that the US Securities and Exchange Commission recently approved.

Sources said the bonds would be priced at a spread of about 3.75 percentage points over similar maturities in US treasuries. The spread is considered cheap and very favorable for the government compared with a previous rate of about 4.25 percent for similar maturities.

The coupon rate would likely be at 8.25 percent, but the final pricing had yet to be announced by foreign banks handling the transaction.

A ranking government official said the warm reception to the Philippine borrowing reflected the improved confidence of foreign and local investors on the country.

The $760-million, 15-year global bond issue last January also fetched more than $2 billion worth of offers.

This round of borrowing is being handled by HSBC Corp. as global coordinator together with JP Morgan Chase & Co. and Deutsche Bank AG, which were named as lead arrangers.

SEC seen setting brokers' capital at ₱25M to ₱50M

THE SECURITIES and Exchange Commission is considering requiring brokers to have a paid-up capital of between P25 million and P50 million, SEC Chair Lilia Bautista said on Monday.

Foreign brokers said earlier they favored a P50-million minimum paid-up capital requirement, while small local stockbrokerages were pushing for P10 million.

Stockbrokers are currently required to have a net capital of at least P5 million.

Last year, the SEC suspended a rule requiring brokers that wanted to deal for their own accounts to comply with a P100-million capital requirement.

SEC market regulation department assistant director Graciano Felizmenio said the SEC might do away with the surety bond requirement and replace it with a form of self-insurance since there had not been a single case where investors went after the surety bond.

The SEC is also looking at amending the implementing rules and regulations of the Securities Regulation Code to encourage electronic confirmation of customers' orders.

Moreover, the commission will expand the form brokers are required to fill out to show that they know their customers in line with the provisions of the anti-money laundering law.

Eagle Equities Inc. president Joey Roxas said in a letter to SEC officials that a review and analysis of the formula for net capital would show that as long as the P5-million net capital requirement was maintained, any and all obligations could be met easily.

Elena R. Torrijos

Napoco slashes Luzon selling rate to ₱0.06/kwh

THE NATIONAL Power Corp. yesterday announced that it reduced its selling rate for Luzon distributors by 6 centavos per kilowatt-hour last month.

Napocor said this meant April billings for end-consumers using a monthly average of 200 kwh would go down by P13.30.

The power firm's corporate planning group explained that Napocor's wholesale rates went down to P4.0582 per kwh from P4.1137.

This was due to lower fuel prices as well as lower usage of oil-fired power plants, the group said.

Napocor officer in charge Roland Quilala said the adjustment showed that the firm's monthly rate changes were revenue-neutral.

"Our automatic adjustments follow the formula approved by the Energy Regulatory Commission," Quilala pointed out.

He added that last month's reduction proved that price changes reflected changes in generation costs, whether an increase or a decrease.

Napocor's effective selling rate is composed of two parts: the basic rate and the automatic adjustments.

The latter covers cost changes in Napocor's fuel purchases, that of power bought from independent power producers and changes in the peso-dollar exhange rate.

The firm said certain grids in Visayas also reduced rates in February.

Effective 01 April 2002

New Corporate Name

FROM :

PGA Yasuda Insurance Company, Inc.
A joint venture between:
Prudential Guarantee and Assurance Inc.
The Yasuda Fire & Marine Insurance Co., Ltd.

TO :

PGA Sompo Japan Insurance Inc.
A joint venture between:
Prudential Guarantee and Assurance Inc.
Sompo Japan Insurance Inc.

The Yasuda Fire and Marine Insurance Company, Ltd. and The Nissan Fire & Marine Insurance Co., Ltd., agreed to merge and the new institution is called **Sompo Japan Insurance Inc.**

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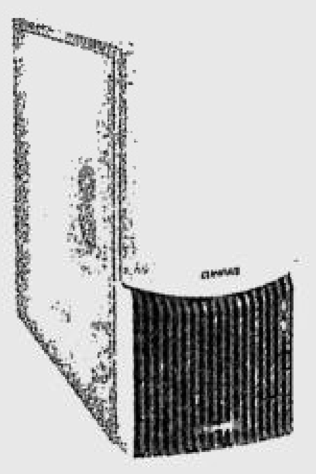

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Gov't loses ₱21B to corruption

THE NATIONAL government is estimated to have lost some P21 billion due to corruption in the procurement of goods, infrastructure and services last year.

This was bared during a technical working group meeting of the House committee on appropriations yesterday on a proposed bill reforming the government procurement process.

The potential leakage in combined public-private transactions, which included purchases for build-operate-transfer projects, is estimated at a staggering P74 billion last year, it was noted.

"These potential P95 billion in leakages could have already funded the Department of Education twice over or built more than half a million houses for our people or constructed over 10,000 kilometers of new concrete roads for our farmers to be able to bring their goods to the marketplace," Budget Undersecretary Laura Pascua said.

The estimated potential losses from loopholes in the procurement process last year validated the findings of the World Bank in a 2000 study that the government was losing more than $2 billion a year, or a whopping $48 billion in the last 20 years, due to corruption.

"We have started implementing administrative reforms in the procurement process but these are not enough. We need a legislative framework to institutionalize these reforms and bring benefits to a wider number of our people," Pascua noted.

The proposed bill aims to standardize the procurement process and ensure greater transparency in the bidding of government contracts.

The bill will also promote transparency and greater competition with the use of electronic means in the procurement process. It also aims to dramatically shorten the procurement process that currently takes a year before the award of the contract.

Some government agencies that have started implementing administrative reforms in the procurement process have already shortened the bidding process, like in civil works where the procurement period had been shortened to two to four months.

Other salient features of the proposed bill are:

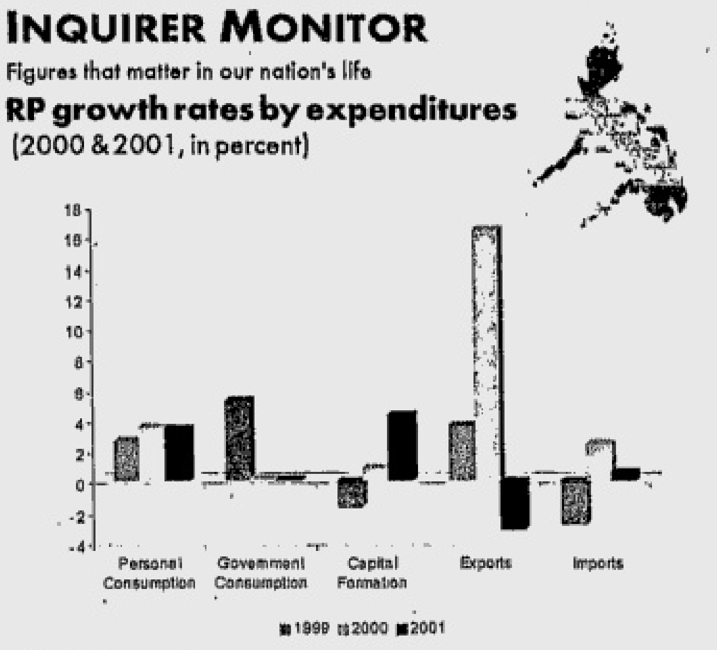
- simplifying prequalification and reducing the discretion on the bidding committee by shifting to simple eligibility checking and strengthening post-qualification.
- professionalization of procurement officials as the proposed Government Procurement Policy Board shall ensure that procurement officials and supply officers of national agencies, government corporations, and local government units (LGUs) will undergo procurement training programs and will be safeguarded against unjust legal suits arising from the performance of their duties.
- inclusion of penal clause and civil liability so that conspiracies in public bidding will be defined and penalized to prevent illegal schemes and frauds. Private individuals who commit collusion, connivance, and provide false information and representation, and any public officer conspiring with them shall suffer the penalty of imprisonment of not less than six years and one month but not more than 15 years.

INQUIRER MONITOR

Figures that matter in our nation's life

RP growth rates by expenditures

(2000 & 2001, in percent)



Source: NSCB

A MAJOR setback of exports which contracted by 3.2 percent last year impeded gross national product growth by 1.4 percentage points. Personal consumption which grew by 3.4 percent contributed 2.6 percentage points to GNP while investments/capital formation which grew by 4.3 percent contributed 0.8 percentage point to overall growth. Government consumption grew by 0.1 percent while imports rose by 0.5 percent. GNP for 2001 was 3.7 percent, in 2000 it was at 4.5 percent.

Maricar D. Toloea, PDI Research

Lepanto hits 'significant' gold deposit in Benguet

LEPANTO Consolidated Mining Co., one of the country's oldest mining firms, yesterday announced the discovery of a significant gold deposit in its mining site in Benguet.

In a disclosure to the Philippine Stock Exchange, Lepanto said the new ore body, which it dubbed as "Victoria II," was discovered southwest of its existing Victoria I deposit and extended southward for 900 meters toward the Nayak area in Benguet.

The company said based on its preliminary findings, the resource was estimated to contain 1.3 million ounces of gold in the 7.3-million-ton resource averaging 5.29 grams per ton.

It further estimated that 1.3 million tons of the resources containing about 5.29 grams per ton gold could be mined or were in the proven or probable categories.

In its disclosure, Lepanto explained that the separate gold deposit was discovered during the construction of the Victoria I Nayak structures.

It said the new deposit was hosted in dacite and sediments and, unlike Victoria I, had significantly less sulphide minerals, including copper.

Shares of Lepanto closed at 20.5 centavos on news of the discovery of the new gold deposit.

Lepanto, formerly known as Mankayan, was incorporated in 1936 after taking control of an ore mine that had been producing copper for over 600 years.

Doris C. Dumlao

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Analysts . . .

From page B1

sector in a year and a half.

Share prices on Wall Street leapt on the news, inspiring Asian equities to follow their lead on Monday. And regional currencies were also on the hunt for gains, heartened by equity-linked inflows and the fact that good news for the United States, still the biggest buyer of Asian exports, was good news for the region.

Indeed, the upbeat news from the United States was matched by positive data issued earlier in the week around the region.

Korea recorded a record high in business sentiment in March. Malaysian exports rose by 4.4 percent month-on-month in January, though an accompanying rise in imports dragged down the country's trade surplus.

And while the Philippines saw exports shrink by 9 percent in January, the contraction was far less painful than the 24-percent fall in December.

By far, analysts are lavishing most of their attention and revisions on the technology-driven economies of Asia—South Korea, Taiwan, Singapore and Malaysia—thanks to a perceived bottoming out of the electronics cycle.

"Morgan continues to expect the bellwether tech economies of Korea, Singapore and Taiwan to lead the charge," said Keon Lee, economist at JP Morgan Chase in Hong Kong, in a research note.

With 128 megabit DRAM prices now selling for around $3.75 from their lows last year of around $1, Taiwan, seen as lagging behind Korea, has enjoyed a spate of upward revisions on its gross domestic product forecasts for 2002.

Deutsche Bank upped it forecast for Taiwan GDP to 3 percent from 2.5 percent, while Salomon Smith Barney bumped its forecast up to 2 percent from 1.7 percent.

While these forecasts are less dazzling than Korea's, they are respectable given that the island witnessed its first-ever full-year contraction last year.

Singapore, too, is expected to recover at a healthy rate after suffering one of its worst recessions in 2001.

JP Morgan recently changed its growth forecast for the city-state to 4 percent from 2.3 percent in 2002 and 6 percent from 5.7 percent in 2003.

The bank also revised its outlook for Malaysia, saying the country's economy would likely grow by 4.0 percent from 2.7 percent in 2002 and by 5.4 percent from 5 percent in 2001.

While many economists have played down the influence that Japan and the yen wield over the rest of the region, others were quick to remind the market over the potential damage that Japan and its currency could wreak upon the rest of Asia.

"Our analysis suggests the real threat to Asia and the rest of the world is if the JPY goes far beyond 140. While it is not our central scenario, it is plausible amid further downgrades by the ratings agencies or a series of collapses in local banks," said Dong Tao, economist at Credit Suisse First Boston in Hong Kong, in a research note.

The yen is currently around 132 per dollar.

Though Japan's impact on Asia was limited in a real economy sense, he added further steep falls in the yen would rob Asia of any real pricing power, and would possibly have serious implications beyond the region.

"An anticipation of further yen weakness would create a vicious cycle through further outflows. A highly competitive JPY could mean companies in the US and Europe, instead of inefficient Japanese ones, going under." *Reuters*

February . . .

From page B1

tary Dante Canlas said the government would scale down the government's inflation target for the full year to an average of 4.5-5.5 percent from the original target range of 5-6 percent.

Bankers Association of the Philippines economist Marjo Elevado said the sharp decline in the inflation rate for February compared to the previous month did not come as a surprise because historically, inflation rate always peaked in the month of January.

DBS Vickers Ballas Securities analyst Jomar Lacson said the slowdown in inflation last month was largely due to the stable food prices.

"But what was surprising was the prices of utility. There were earlier expectations of some increase in fuel and electricity but since these remained stable, the country's inflation rate benefited," Lacson said. "I think inflation will remain flat for the next three months."

Lacson said inflation would only likely pick up starting June due to the base effect compared to the previous year.

With the downtrend in inflation and interest rates as well as the improved outlook for the country's exports, Canlas said he was confident that the country would meet the 4- to 4.5-percent growth in gross domestic product this year.

Business-led body formed to check smuggling

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

MALACAÑANG has formed an oversight committee consisting of business representatives who will take a direct hand in monitoring and curbing smuggling, the biggest scourge of domestic producers.

Federation of Philippine Industries chair Raul Concepcion said he was tasked to chair the oversight committee, which would focus initially on smuggling in Subic and Cebu.

Concepcion said these two areas were "perceived to be high-profile" smuggling points.

Among the goods and commodities that are smuggled through Subic and Cebu are rice, sugar, cement, petroleum products and used vehicles, he said.

Concepcion said the creation of an oversight committee was significant because it was the first time that the government allowed private sector representatives to take a more direct hand in checking smuggling compared to mere consultations in the past.

Concepcion said the oversight committee would meet with the Department of Finance, Bureau of Customs and Bureau of Internal Revenues two to three times a month for a regular update of their monitoring activities in Subic and Cebu.

The committee would also make recommendations on how to solve smuggling for immediate implementation, he added.

Concepcion said this initiative by Malacañang was an offshoot of last year's economic summit, where President Macapagal-Arroyo vowed to address flagrant smuggling operations in the country.

Concepcion said Malacañang took a renewed interest in stopping smuggling in the country because this activity had been putting big holes in the government's collection not only of custom duties but also of the value-added tax.

He said smuggling not only occurs when goods are slipped into the country without passing through customs official, but it also happens when goods intended for sale in special economic zones or for re-export are diverted to the domestic market.

Concepcion said that in the latter case, the government does not only forego custom duties but also the VAT.

The Bureau of Customs said earlier it was seriously considering a proposal to limit the use of customs bonded warehouses to the semiconductor industry.

A top official of the Philippine Chamber of Commerce and Industry said the customs bureau was studying this move to check the illegal diversion to the local market of raw materials and semi-processed goods meant for re-export.

Unscrupulous businessmen have reportedly been using customs bonded warehouses as a backdoor to bring in their factory inputs without paying taxes.

These warehouses, according to the PCCI, have become one of the biggest smuggling gateways in the country because of the government's inability to monitor the flow of goods going in and out of these special depots.

A variety of goods pass through these warehouses, which currently number 708, with more than half inactive.

The PCCI official said customs officials were hoping that it would be easier to monitor only semiconductor products in their warehouses rather than a vast array of goods ranging from textiles to chemicals to agriculture commodities.

He added that apart from limiting the eligible products that may be brought into customs bonded warehouses, the customs bureau is also planning to trim their number by revoking the licenses of inactive users.

He said the customs bureau was reviewing Customs Administrative Order 2-91 and Customs Memorandum Order 39-91 that laid down the rules and regulations governing establishment, supervision and control of customs bonded warehouses in response to mounting complaints from business groups.

2 firms propose monorail for $700-M PNR rehab program

LEGAZPI CITY—Two foreign firms have proposed to undertake the $700-million rehabilitation of the country's railways using the modern monorail system on a turnkey basis, according to Sorsogon Rep. Jose Solis.

Solis, who filed House Bill 3206 seeking to rehabilitate the Philippine National Railways, identified the two firms as Eurowest International Inc. and Dreamtime Partners Ltd.

He said House Speaker Jose de Venecia favorably endorsed to President Macapagal-Arroyo the PNR rehabilitation project that, he said, had the full backing of almost all members of the House of Representatives.

The foreign firms' offer was made by Dennis Moyen, Eurowest chair and chief executive, during a congressional meeting of the committee on railway chaired by Solis.

Solis quoted Moyen as saying that his company could provide the Philippines the most efficient modern method of transportation of both people and cargo available today, as well as provide the financing and development of the entire project.

He said Moyen claimed that the monorail system widely used in the United States, Europe and Japan would cost only a third of the cost of a light rail transit and even less than the existing heavy rail being used by the PNR.

"Moyen explained that the monorail is more advantageous than other railway systems in that during construction, there will be less congestion, aside from it being more flexible," Solis said.

Monorail construction is far simpler and faster than light rail, with fewer disturbances to existing utilities, business, streets and residents because of its modular nature that requires significantly less heavy construction, he added. *Job Belen, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*

RCBC gets stable outlook from US ratings agency

INTERNATIONAL ratings agency Moody's Investors Service has revised the ratings outlook for Rizal Commercial Banking Corp. to stable from negative.

The upgrade followed a change of outlook for Moody's sovereign rating for the Philippines to positive from stable.

The stable outlook for RCBC reflected Moody's view that although some further deterioration in the bank's financial condition might occur, this would be within the bounds of current rating levels.

Moreover, the rating agency said it believed that RCBC's credit profile might start to stabilize later this year, possibly leading to improvements in the latter part of 2002 or early 2003.

Moody's said the more favorable economic climate for the bank and its customers should result from the Macapagal administration's efforts to address fiscal sustainability, in combination with the prospects for a modest recovery in exports later in the year.

Moreover, the proposed "special purpose asset vehicle bill" should permit the sale of non-performing loans and foreclosed assets to specialized asset management companies, providing RCBC with an immediate source of income and relieving the bank of some of its current administrative burden.

RCBC's recent successful stock offering is viewed as a credit positive by the rating agency, coming in the wake of some negative publicity surrounding a controversial government bond transaction.

Moody's believes that this and the lack of significant signs of business degradation demonstrate the resilience of RCBC's franchise and the strength of its customer relationships.

Like many banks in the Philippines, RCBC is increasing its focus on consumer banking. Although competition in this sector is strong, the bank has shown some recent success in expanding its share of the keenly contested foreign remittances market. Regulatory moves to allow the cross-selling of financial services should also play to RCBC's strengths over the medium term, as it is affiliated with some well-positioned insurance providers.

Despite these positives, RCBC's ratings remain constrained by the difficult economic environment, its relatively small size in a consolidating market, intensifying competition, and the remaining burden of impaired assets. *Elena R. Torrijos*

Aboitiz One reports ₱1-M income from Indon route

DAVAO CITY—In just over a month, Aboitiz One has already earned some P1 million from its recently opened Davao-Manado, North Sulawesi route.

The Filipino-owned airline reported that it was already sending seven intermittent flights in a month's time carrying a total cargo load of 32,943.5 kilograms.

Mae Marte, team leader of Aboitiz Air for Davao and General Santos, said large volumes of Mindanao products, including tuna, cosmetics, plant equipment and fighting cocks, were now moving to Manado City, Indonesia.

"It's a clear indication that Mindanaoans are responding very positively to this initiative by taking advantage of the newly opened cargo service route," she said.

She said Aboitiz One was able to secure "a much favorable" flight approval from Jakarta, Indonesia that allowed the company to fly the route every Wednesday and Saturday.

Aboitiz Air had its inaugural flight from Davao to Manado on Jan. 22. It was meant to provide an alternative route for Manado City's cargo to Los Angeles using excess cargo capacities in the Davao and General Santos airports.

For its first flight, the airline transported 3.2 tons of cosmetics to Manado and brought back a ton of tuna.

Manado, the capital of North Sulawesi, has a population of about 400,000. *Joel B. Escovilla, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

9 GI sheet makers urge gov't to level playing field

NINE major local galvanized sheet makers have asked the government to level the playing field in the industry by adopting more liberal standards without necessarily compromising quality.

In a letter to Bureau of Product Standard director Jesus Motoomull, the GI sheet makers stressed that the Philippines' commitment to the World Trade Organization mandated the adoption of more liberal standards if they were to cushion the impact of liberalization.

It was the first time that the GI sheet sector made a united stand on issues confronting their industry.

In their letter, the GI sheet makers proposed the rationalization of standards for zinc-coated steel sheets, specifically the adoption of 0.30 millimeters and 0.50 mm as standard thickness for GI sheets in addition to the existing standards of 0.20 mm, 0.40 mm and 0.6 mm.

The group said Philippine National Standard 67, which only allowed the production of the last three thickness standards, had been rendered outdated with the influx of imported materials carrying the 0.30- and 0.50-mm standards.

"There is already a widespread use of this thickness in the market owing to the proliferation of imports. This indicates market acceptance of these sizes," the group said.

Despite the growing market demand, the group said local GI sheet makers were at the losing end since they were not allowed to produce the 0.30- and 0.50-mm standards under the present setup.

Easing the requirement, they said, "would give the consumer more flexibility and preference to choose for his needs and requirements," while leveling the playing field.

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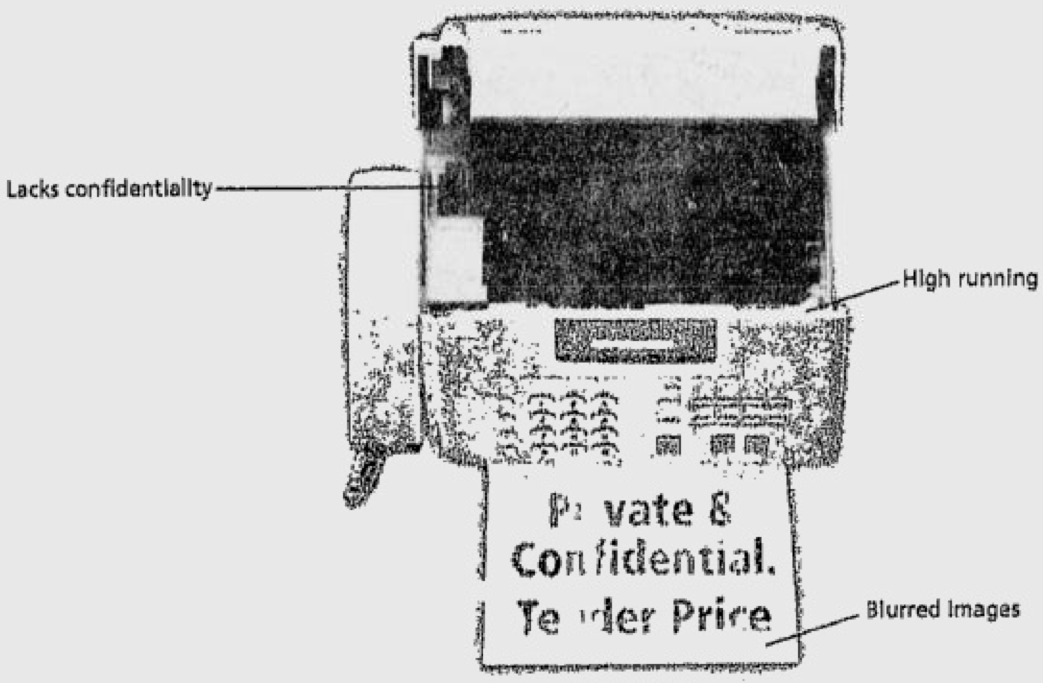

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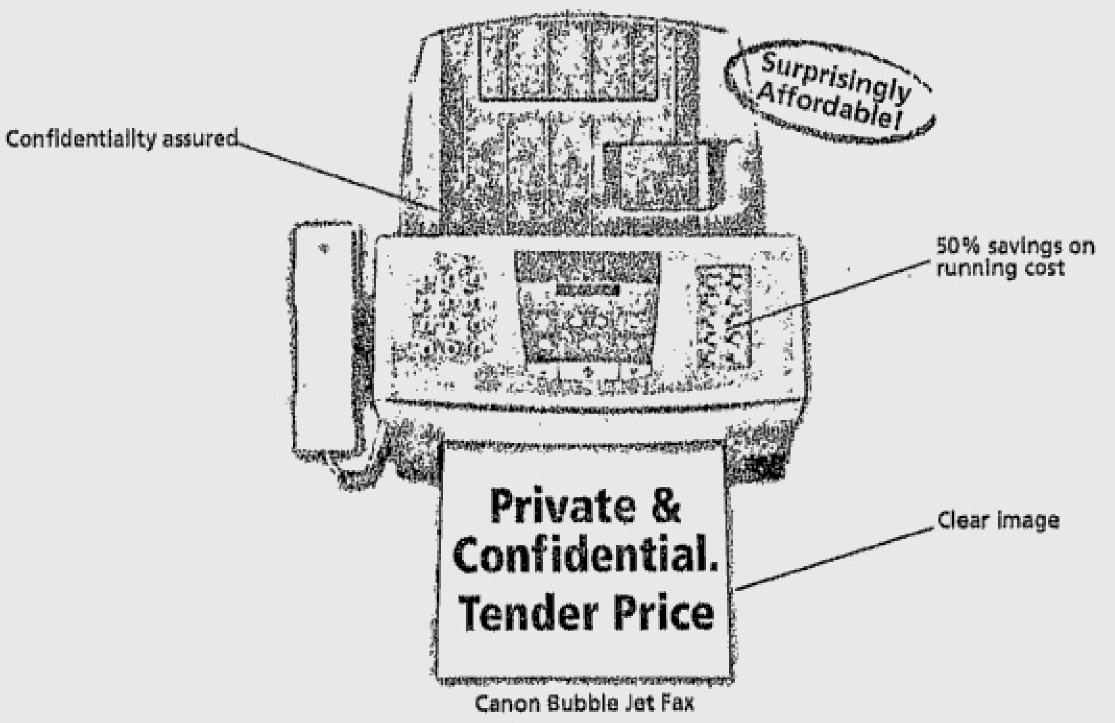
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US Treasury officials doubt if recession really happened

WASHINGTON—Amid burgeoning signs of recovery, officials at the US Treasury and White House on Monday questioned if the downturn in the world's largest economy actually constituted a recession.

"There is now a chance that there may not even have been one (a recession)," Randall Quarles, the US executive director at the International Monetary Fund and designated assistant Treasury secretary for international affairs, said at a banking conference in Washington.

"The recession has been extraordinarily mild and short."

The official arbiter of business cycles, the National Bureau of Economic Research, declared in November that a US recession began in March of last year.

A recession is loosely defined by some economists as two consecutive quarters of declining gross domestic product.

The NBER, however, uses a broader definition that involves indicators such as employment, income and industrial production and does not use GDP as a yardstick.

According to the NBER, some, but not all, of the periods it has previously defined as recessions have comprised two or more quarters of economic contraction. Since the positive data for the fourth quarter made the third quarter the only negative one, some economists have questioned the NBER's characterization.

The economy grew at a surprisingly fast annual rate of 1.4 percent in the fourth quarter after shrinking 1.3 percent in the third quarter.

Randall Kroszner, a member of the White House's Council of Economic Advisers who was at the same conference, also questioned whether the economy had ever entered recession.

"Some people use two quarters of negative growth. We haven't had that," Kroszner said.

One private sector economist has even written to the NBER asking the group to take back their recession call.

"In light of a more complete picture of how the economy actually behaved in 2001, I ask you to take back your recession call," Ken Mayland, an economist at ClearView Economics, wrote in a letter to the committee.

Mayland argues that for a recession to be declared, there must be a significant decline in the economy for a sufficient duration.

But the NBER is sticking by its call. One member of the NBER business-cycle dating committee explained that the panel does not make a decision based solely on gross domestic product because the series is revised so often. *Reuters*

Buffett says CEOs should lead disclosure

NEW YORK—Billionaire investor Warren Buffett on Monday joined the debate surrounding corporate accounting, advocating better disclosure and blasting chief executives who claim they aren't responsible for the details of their company's financial reports.

"I would suggest that the CEO regard himself as the chief disclosure officer of the company," Buffett said at a Securities and Exchange Commission conference in New York.

"I think the owners can discipline him. We own 100 percent of some companies and believe me, we can discipline the CEO if he doesn't tell us what's going on."

Buffett railed against the type of ignorance that executives who presided over the collapse of energy giant Enron Corp. have claimed.

"I think the CEO knows when something material has happened," Buffett said at a panel including SEC chair Harvey Pitt and New York Stock Exchange chair Richard Grasso.

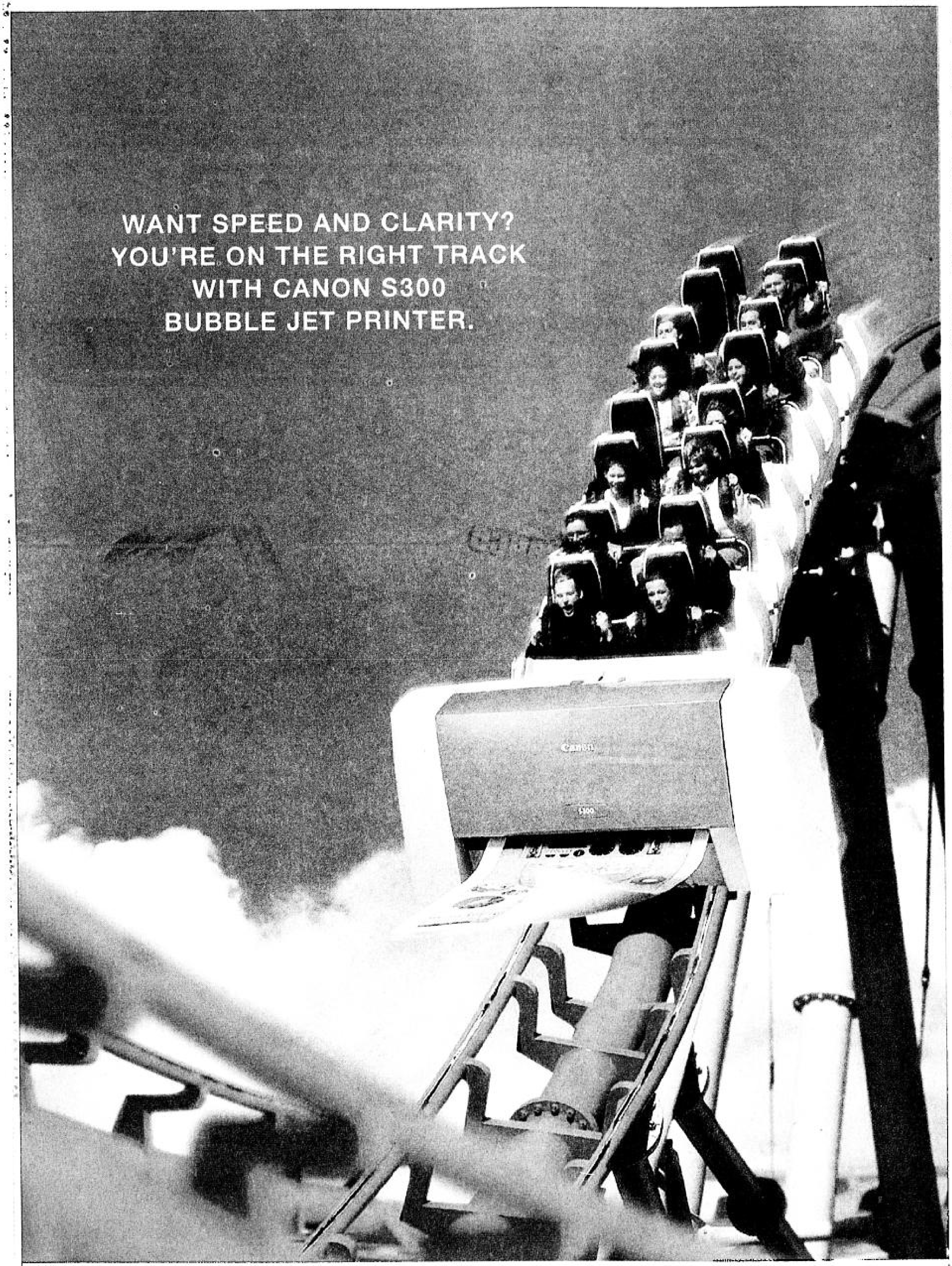
"In the end it's the CEO who determines the qualitative aspect of disclosure, and that's all-important," Buffett said.

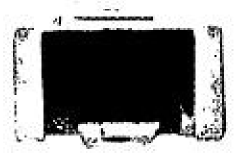
Proposals to combat the opaque accounting methods epitomized by Enron were at the center of the four-hour discussion, which also included professors, lawyers and Wall Street money managers.

The SEC is proposing faster, fuller disclosure from companies in the wake of Enron's demise. The Houston company's bankruptcy filing in December was the largest ever and was related to obscure financial partnerships used to keep debt off the company's books.

NYSE chair Grasso dismissed the idea that new laws can solve the problems behind Enron's collapse, saying: "You've got to start with the premise that you cannot legislate honesty."

Grasso made a plea for plain language financial reports and said some accounting procedures, while technically correct, can often mislead investors. *Reuters*





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Fraud online much greater than offline

SAN FRANCISCO—Online fraud losses last year were 19 times greater, dollar for dollar, than offline fraud, a prominent Internet research firm said Monday.

Though only 1.14 percent, or $700 million, of estimated $61.8 billion spent online was lost to fraud, it was still far and away exceeds the numbers for offline credit card fraud, reported GartnerG2, an Internet consultancy.

The survey also found that, in a survey of 1,000 US online buyers, some 5.2 percent of Internet consumers reported credit card fraud. Another 1.9 percent said they were victims of identity theft—when someone steals a credit card number or other personal data.

The consultancy added that 18 percent of those respondents are using digital theft protection software currently being promoted by Visa and Mastercard, the two leading credit card companies.

The consultancy faulted these credit card companies, however, for failing to create financial incentives to use these safeguards by lowering credit card transaction fees for users.

"Consumers are interested in using these new security systems, which can significantly reduce online fraud. The credit card companies should, however, back up their belief in these systems by lowering fees for all merchants who support them," said GartnerG2 research director Avivah Litan. "This would guarantee even more widespread adoption." *AFP*

Ford chief says diesel can cure global warming

DETROIT—Diesel fuel may be the right remedy to help cure global warming and raise vehicle fuel economy, a top Ford Motor Co. executive has said.

"Diesel can answer the needs of society," Chief Operating Officer Nick Scheele said during a panel discussion Monday on the subject at the Society of Automotive Engineers World Congress.

He admitted that today's diesel fuel, although much cleaner than the earlier versions that spewed black smoke and gave off a strong odor, does have the drawbacks of high sulfur content and particulate emission, but that shouldn't deter its use.

"Yes, it's got problems, but its advantages vastly outweigh its problems," Scheele said.

He noted that diesel offers greater fuel economy and faster acceleration than gasoline.

Scheele is so eager to sell the public on diesel, he said Ford would circulate some diesel-powered Ford Focuses to the media and government agencies in hopes of eliciting positive word of mouth.

He said strict air quality regulations in California were standing in the way of greater production of diesel-powered vehicles. If they can't be sold in such a large automotive market, he said, the vehicles would not be profitable enough. *AP*

Global Crossing CEO resigns from board

HONG KONG—The chief executive at bankrupt telecommunications giant Global Crossing Ltd. has resigned from the board of its ailing Asian subsidiary to focus full-time on rescuing the parent company, a spokesperson said Tuesday.

John Legere quit as board director of Asia Global Crossing on Feb. 12 after serving in the post for two years, said Madelyn Smith a spokesperson for the fiber-optic carrier.

"His duties at Global Crossing didn't permit him the time to serve on the Asia Global Crossing board," Smith said by telephone. "His energy is needed to focus on Global Crossing."

Legere had stepped down in January as chief executive of Asia Global Crossing, which is 58.8-percent owned by Bermuda-based Global Crossing.

Asian Global Crossing was recently delisted from the New York Stock Exchange because of the company's inability to quickly resolve its financial woes.

Global Crossing owns a massive undersea fiber-optic network connecting 220 cities in 27 countries and early this year became the largest company in the telecom industry to file for US Chapter 11 bankruptcy protection. *AP*

Stocks surge across globe on recovery hopes

NEW YORK—Stocks flew higher around the globe and government debt prices sagged as investors bet that an economic recovery is in the cards and a rebound in corporate profits may not be far behind.

US and Japanese stock indexes roared to multi-month highs and European stocks posted their biggest one-day gains of the year after signs emerged late last week that the US manufacturing sector is out of recession and consumer spending is gathering steam.

The US blue-chip Dow Jones Industrial Average scaled to its highest close Monday since July 19, as the broad market added to gains made in a hefty rally on Friday.

The stellar performance in stocks and growing hopes that economic recovery might be stronger than expected dragged on government bonds, pushing yields higher, and short-term US Treasuries sagged for a third session in a row.

The Japanese yen cruised higher against the US dollar and the euro, carried on the coattails of the surge in Tokyo stocks after the benchmark Nikkei average scored its biggest percentage gain since March 2001, surging 5.9 percent.

The dollar also lost ground against the euro, sagging to a one-week low despite Wall Street's rally, as investors bet that a US-led rally could boost overseas economies and their currencies.

Crude oil prices ticked modestly higher as Russian indecision over whether to extend crude export cuts into the second quarter kept investors on their guard.

Stocks catch fire on recovery hopes. *Reuters*

Economy turns corner—EU

BRUSSELS—European Commissioner for Monetary Affairs Pedro Solbes said on Monday that the economy had turned the corner and was on the mend.

"We reached the bottom in the fourth quarter of 2001," Solbes told a press conference after a meeting of eurozone finance ministers, adding "today's data confirm that."

European Union business confidence climbed to a five-month last month, data released on Monday showed, and other leading indicators have also recently turned higher. *Reuters*

Dot-com layoffs reach two-year low in February

SAN FRANCISCO—Dot-com layoffs have reached a two-year low, a prominent job placement firm reported Monday.

According to Chicago-based Challenger, Gray and Christmas, Internet company sackings dropped to 670 in February, the lowest since April 2000, when dot-com companies disgorged 327 workers.

Challenger said February's figure was "an indication that the Internet downfall may be nearing an end."

Dot-com layoffs hit a peak in April 2001, when 17,554 Internet workers were put out on the street.

The consultancy reported a total of 144,912 Internet job cuts since it began tracking those numbers in December 1999. The largest wave of those sackings, Challenger said, took place between November 2000 and June 2001.

That period coincides with the collapse of what is now called the "Internet bubble," after frenzied dot-com investors realized that many of these start-up companies had no realistic chance of recouping initial capitalizations.

Challenger chief executive John Challenger said many of the remaining dot-com companies are still tenuous.

"Companies that survived the collapse did so by cutting back to the bare bones and, despite these measures, many are still waiting to see their first profits," Challenger said in a statement. "It could be years before the Internet begins to live up to its potential." *AFP*

Microsoft CEO says sanctions to ruin Windows

WASHINGTON—Microsoft Corp. chief executive Steve Ballmer said in legal depositions released Monday that the company would have to withdraw its monopoly Windows operating system from the market if a court imposes severe sanctions being sought by nine of the states in the antitrust case.

Under questioning last month from a lawyer representing the states, Ballmer contended that the strict sanctions proposed by some of the states would create havoc among consumers and in the computer industry by requiring Microsoft to offer thousands of different version of Windows.

Ballmer also said the states' proposed sanctions could cost billions of dollars and "erode" the value of Microsoft's flagship product by allowing competitors to "clone" the operating system.

"The proposal as put forward by the . . . states would—would not be a decree that I would know how to comply with," Ballmer said in a 143-page transcript of the deposition released by Microsoft. "I actually think we would need to withdraw the Windows product from the marketplace."

Lawyers for the nine states, including California, Massachusetts, Iowa and Connecticut, questioned Ballmer on Feb. 8 in preparation for upcoming hearings on what sanctions should be imposed on the company to prevent future antitrust violations.

The software giant reached a deal with the justice department in November after an appeals court in June upheld a lower court conclusion that Microsoft had used illegal tactics to maintain its Windows monopoly.

That settlement would force Microsoft to disclose some of the inner workings of Windows and give computer makers more freedom to feature non-Microsoft software on the machines they sell.

While nine of the 18 states in the lawsuit are still pursuing the case, another nine states have agreed to sign on to the proposed settlement.

A hearing on the proposed settlement is scheduled to begin on Wednesday. Further proceedings are due to start next week on the non-settling states' demands for stricter sanctions against Microsoft for violating US antitrust laws.

The dissenting states are demanding that Microsoft sell a cheaper, stripped-down version of Windows and allow computer makers to remove add-on software features such as its Internet browser and media player.

A source close to the dissenting states said Ballmer's comments foreshadow Microsoft's legal strategy in the hearings: The company's lawyers, he said, will exaggerate the impact of the provisions in the states' proposal in order to discredit them.

In his Feb. 8 deposition, Ballmer said it would be impossible to get the operating system to run properly and still meet the states' demands.

"That's the way good software gets designed. So if you pull out a piece it won't run," Ballmer said.

Ballmer also criticized the states' demand that other companies get wider access to the inner workings of the operating system. That, he said, would allow them to "clone" Windows, prompting Microsoft to stop investing in research and development on the operating system.

In another deposition released on Monday, Jim Allchin, the Microsoft vice president in charge of Windows development, conceded the company was working on so-called embedded versions of Windows that "componentize" the operating system, or break it into pieces that customers can mix and match to suit their needs.

"We're trying to get there," he said during his Feb. 13 deposition. *Reuters*

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MESSAGES

HER EXCELLENCY PRESIDENT **GLORIA MACAPAGAL-ARROYO**

My cordial greetings and best wishes to District Governor Ernesto Salas and the delegates and participants of the 2002 District Conference in Rotary International District 3830, Philippines, as they conduct this prestigious 2-day convention in their district from March 7 to 8, 2002 at the NBC Tent, Global City, Fort Bonifacio, Taguig, Metro Manila.

The Rotary International theme *"Mankind Is Our Business"* aptly describes the commitment and dedication of Rotarians to the promotion of worldwide humanitarian service. The service that they endeavor to provide among the people, particularly the less-privileged, will enable them to attain their potential as useful individuals and members of our society. I commend the officers and members of the Rotary movement for their untiring commitment to ensure the welfare of the people.

The National Government joins hands with the Rotarians of District 3830 in nurturing the welfare of the people and creating consciousness through meaningful activities. With this partnership in service, I am confident that we will find more reason to be happy with the improved disposition and overall outlook that we have given to the members of the community.

Believing in the efficacy of our continued partnership in the attainment of our goals, I call on all Rotarians to continuously employ their expertise and resources with the same dedication and determination to succeed in tandem with the initiatives of the government to realize one common goal.

Mabuhay tayong lahat!

GMArroyo
GLORIA MACAPAGAL-ARROYO
President, Republic of the Philippines

ROTARY INTERNATIONAL PRESIDENT **RICHARD "RICK" KING**

To all Rotarians and Guests attending the District 3830 Conference

Cherie and I send warm greetings and heartfelt good wishes to everyone attending this 2001-02 District Conference. We also take this opportunity to express our appreciation for the dedication and hard work of Governor Ernesto L.Salas and Chi-Chi, who along with the conference committee, has put together a comprehensive program of Rotary information, fun and fellowship. This event provides a unique opportunity for you to learn more about Rotary and to share with friends new and old in gaining a deeper understanding of what it means to be a part of this organization. I urge you to take full advantage of all that this event has to offer.

Unfortunately it is not possible for Cherie and me to visit all the conferences taking place this year, so I have invited an outstanding Rotarian to represent me at your conference. Please welcome Rotary International Director P.C. Thomas and his spouse, Elsamma as our personal representatives. I'm sure you will enjoy their company during your conference. I've asked P.C. to share with you my special concerns, including the importance of increasing our membership and strengthening our clubs.

We are at a critical time in Rotary's history and I am counting on each of you to help in demonstrating to people everywhere that for Rotary International in the 21st century — MANKIND IS OUR BUSINESS!

With warm regard.

Sincerely,

RICHARD D. KING
President, Rotary

ROTARY INTERNATIONAL PRESIDENT REPRESENTATIVE **P. C. THOMAS**

It is our great pleasure to be here with you all at your District Conference as the RI President's Representatives.

This important District event is an occasion for all of you to closely examine the past activities, to initiate new projects and programmes, to take appropriate resolutions and adopt recommendations in line with the RI policies and principles. This District Conference is also an occasion for Rotarians of District 3830 to interact, exchange views and to address topical Rotary issues of importance and relevance. I am sure, the active Rotarians of Dist 3830 have been eagerly looking forward to this Conference and I wish you all a beneficial participation and deliberation. My best wishes for a successful District Conference!

With warm regards,

P.C. THOMAS
Discon Program

DISTRICT GOVERNOR **ERNESTO "ERNIE" SALAS**

To My Dear Fellow Rotarians in District 3830, Philippines :

As the countdown to 2002 District Conference begins, I am calling on all Rotarians in our District to come in full force on March 7 and 8, 2002 and enjoy the excellent program and fine fellowship that this annual centerpiece District activity brings.

The 2002 District Conference, chaired by SDG Rene Magadia, and hosted by the Rotary Club of Makati North, headed by Pres. Boy Sevilla, will offer opportunities to interact with Rotary and other top leaders in the public and private sectors in various settings and gather information for your clubs at various plenary and group discussions, aside from making new Rotary friends in our various fellowship events.

The various Conference committees have worked long and hard to bring you an outstanding program that will provide even greater Rotary information and excellent fellowship. Expect a highly-charged program of events with interesting and very informative plenary sessions and group discussions that only Discon Vice-Chairman and Conference Program Chairman/PP Chat Tan (RC Makati North) can deliver.

You will hear from current RI Director P.C. Thomas of Ootacamund, Tamil Nadu, India, a highly-respected educator and representative of RI President Rick King the state of Rotary today and Rotary's Global Quest for membership.

You will find it very interesting to explore avenues upon which current national issues can be solved through a strong partnership with the National Government and Rotary through the messages that will be conveyed by top government leaders that we have invited as resource speakers.

Yet, it will not be all Rotary business. Our Conference theme says it all : *"Mankind is Our Business ... but it doesn't mean we can't have fun!"* As we take time out from the business side of Rotary, we will all be having fun and enjoyment at the Grand Fellowship Night and the Governor's Ball where our Rotary clubs participate in musical competitions, with grand cash prizes and other incentives to be given to the winners. Enjoy exhibits, car shows and other interesting activities that also Discon Vice-Chairman/PP Porong Herrera (RC Makati North) and his indefatigable committee has prepared. We will also be enjoying fine cuisine and limitless opportunities to win valuable paintings, appliances, scooters, Omega watches, round-trip plane tickets to Barcelona for the 2002 RI Convention or a Bahamas cruise during on-the-spot raffle draws and many other pleasant surprises.

Chichi and I enjoin all of you, particularly our new Rotarians, to be there at the 2002 Discon and savor for yourselves the fine fellowship and goodwill that we will all share during this special 2-day activity.

This is one experience that you should not miss. See you at **Discon 2002!**

Gov. Ernie
ERNESTO "ERNIE" L. SALAS
District Governor, RY 2001-2002

HOST CLUB PRESIDENT **FEDERICO "BOY" SEVILLA**

WELCOME!
Your host club - the Rotary Club of Makati North – welcomes you to Discon 2002.

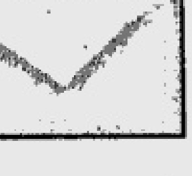
The preparations for the Discon – traditionally the biggest and most important annual district event – is a formidable task. At the same time, it is an opportunity to bring together fellow Rotarians for fellowship and serious reflection on the business of making mankind our business.

We take immense pride and pleasure in having helped make Discon 2002 possible. And we hope that our preparations will enable all of us to make a recommitment to making mankind our business even as we continue to build bonds of fellowship and community.

Mabuhay!

FEDERICO "BOY" SEVILLA
President, Host Club RC Makati North

DISCON 2002 OVERALL CHAIRPERSON, **SDG RENATO "ATO" MAGADIA**



As District 3830 Conference Chairman, it is my distinct honor to welcome and express our appreciation to all the sponsors and participants of Discon 2002 for their support.

The conceptualization of Discon 2002 was not easy, as we had to hurdle difficult challenges. But as the saying goes "the show must go on". And so the preparation of Discon 2002, hosted by Rotary Club of Makati North, tested the creativity and resolve of its organizers. This resulted in a new initiative, never done before, which included the launching of the Oktoberfest at the Tent, Fort Bonifacio that brought the level of pre-registered participants to its highest level.

See you all at the Discon 2002.

SDG RENATO "RENE" MAGADIA
Discon 2002 Overall Chairperson

DISCON 2002 Highlights

Fun fellowship, outstanding program, luxurious prizes; all these await District 3830 members who will participate in the biggest and most important event of the district: Discon 2002 to be held on March 7 & 8, 2002 at the NBC Tent, The Fort, Global City, Taguig.

This year's theme, "Mankind is our Business", puts much emphasis on renewing the two commitments made during the previous year. First, to offer workable solutions to the problems that plague mankind. Next, to strengthen our membership, to seek out new members who would like to develop their talents and skills and use these to help others.

The two-day conference will help us determine the directions we need to take in order to keep our commitments and set the goals we hope to achieve to stay true to our vision.

CONFERENCE HIGHLIGHTS:

March 6 - Wheels of Rotary (12 NN - 9 PM)

The biggest names in the automotive industry converge at the NBC Tent on March 6, 2002 in "Wheels of Rotary".

PLACE YOUR BID and buy the car of your dreams at 20% below market prices. This will only happen once. Don't miss this exclusive chance. You will really regret it. Bring the whole family, ask your friends to visit too. Come to the NBC Tent from 6 March to 8 March. All Rotarians and the general public are welcome.

Witness a one-of-a-kind exhibit to be participated by the likes of BMW, Porsche, Ford, Volvo, Hyundai, Nissan, Toyota and Audi!

March 7 - District Conference 2002 Day 1 (7:30 AM - 10 PM)

7:30 AM	*Breakfast in Honor of RIPR P.C. Thomas*
9:00 AM	*Registration of Discon 2002 Participants and Guests*
10:00 AM	*Rotary Window Exhibit*
1-2:30 PM	*Photo Session with RIPR PC Thomas*
3-5:00 PM	*First Plenary Session: Opening Ceremonies*
6-10:00 PM	*Fellowship Cocktails (Musical Area Competitions)*

March 8 - District Conference 2002 Day 2 (7:30 AM - 11 PM)

7:30 AM - 12 NN	*Second Plenary Session: Promoting **"Mankind is our Business"** in the district and in the community* ***"The Role of Rotary in Addressing Current National Concerns"** by Hon. Franklin Drilon, Senate President, Republic of the Philippines*
12 NN - 1:20 PM	*Third Plenary Session: **Building a Nation: Government's Partnership with Rotary*** ***"The Role of Rotarians in the Promotion of Peace and Understanding in the Philippines and the World"** by Hon. Angelo T. Reyes, Secretary of National Defense*
1:45 - 2:40 PM	*Fourth Plenary Session: **The Rotary Foundation***
2:55 - 4:20 PM	*Closing Plenary Session: **The Rotary Academy and Other District Matters***
6:30 - 11 PM	***Governor's Night***

Breakaway Sessions (March 8)

10:45 AM	*Conference Voting (Le Souffle Restaurant)*
1:00 PM	*ROTARACT seminar (NBC Tent, Annex)*
2:15 PM	*Rotary Community Corps*

Raffle Prizes to be given away during the two-day conference include: Omega watches, Lufthansa round trip to Barcelona for the 2002 RI Convention, a Bahamas Cruise and other exciting prizes to be won every 15 minutes!

DISCON 2002 would like to thank the following:

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THE STATE OF ROTARY DISTRICT 3830 IN 2001-2002

GOV. ERNESTO " ERNIE" L. SALAS

The first part of Rotary Year 2001-2002 has seen major developments in the programs of Rotary International in District 3830, Philippines. More particularly, these improvements have brought about tremendous changes in providing short and long-term benefits to our clubs and the community. All of its ongoing programs and projects have been carried on successfully, and in many cases, have been enhanced. In the continuing evolution of District 3830, our Platinum Club Presidents and Platinum District Officers have been supportive and very innovative in various significant ways. In short, we have continued to do.well through acts of kindness, because **Mankind Is Our Business.**

Membership Growth. Over 500 new Rotarians have been inducted in various Rotary clubs in the district. From a starting figure of 2009 members in 01 July 2001, there are 557 new members inducted in various clubs, as of the end of December 2001. Five new clubs are now being organized, RC Parañaque Northwest, Makati Jupiter, Parañaque Midwest, Parañaque Dayang-dayang and Rizal Marilag within the year.

Club Extension. There are now 64 active Rotary clubs in the district after two new Rotary clubs have been chartered and recognized during the 1st semester of the year. These clubs are RC Paranaque Lakambini and RC Makati Kalayaan. Another new club will soon be recognized, RC Paranaque Northeast within the year.

Improved Rotary education and training. The Rotary Academy has been in the forefront of Rotary education & training in the District. The training sessions and modules designed by the Academy focused on new member education, club & financial strengthening & leadership development.

Community Service Activities. Service projects that benefit the youth, the elderly, the sick, the protection of the environment and many others have enabled the people in the community to look forward to the improvement of their quality of life.

These community service activities include the district-wide Mega Jobs Fair, medical and dental missions; New Generations Conference, Boy Scouts' camp-outs, postermaking, essay-writing, or oratorical contests for the youth,; tree-planting and blood-letting projects; establishment of cooperatives; feeding the elderly, caring for homeless or abandoned street children, or tending abused children and women.

Extra efforts to orient communities about Rotary and its projects thru aggressive information print and broadcast media campaign and *masa*-oriented publications and literature.

Contributions to The Rotary Foundation As Of 28 February 2002

Annual Programs Fund or Unrestricted Contributions Available for SHARE In RY 2004-2005 :	US $ 101,827
Permanent Fund :	1,000
Restricted to Matching Grants :	36,290
Pollo Plus :	1,900
	US $ 141,017

TRF Contributors

Major Donor : Pres. Juan Carlos RC Makati
Benefactor : PDG Leo De Guzman
Paul Harris Fellows : 92
TRF Sustaining Members : 209

In all, as of 28 February 2002, there are 303 Rotarians that made contributions to the Foundation representing roughly 12% of the total number of Rotarians in the district.

Strengthening and development of each Rotary club. While these RI and District thrusts served to be our key results areas, emphasis in our year of service also achieved greater significance because of the strengthened friendships with fellow Rotarians; and opportunities created that established new ones. The support and cooperation of Rotarians in District 3830 have enabled all of us achieve significant strides to further Rotary service, making it enjoyable for all, because **Mankind Is Our Business.**

DISTRICT 3830 SENIOR DEPUTY GOVERNORS

GIL MIGUEL" Migs" T. PUYAT
District Secretary/ Administratin
RC Makati Ayala

JOSE " Joe" S. ALEJANDRO
External Affairs A
Rotary Club of Makati

LORENZO " Bobby" M. CINCO
Chairman, Dist. Officers Fellowship & Discon 2002 Attendance
RC Parañaque South

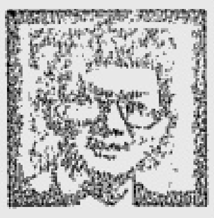
ANGELITO " Lito" E. COLONA
Programs A(Club Service)
RC Makati Legaspi

JOSE "Jun" L. CORTES
SDG-At-Large
Rotary Club of Makati Central

MA.EVELYN "Eve" C. ALMAZAN
External Affairs B
RC Makati Greenbelt

IGNACIO "Nash" S. PABLO
Programs D (International Service & Major Joint Project
Rotary Club of Rizal West

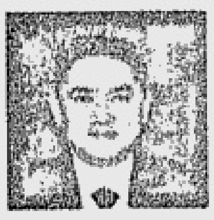
LISANDRO "Boy" ABADIA
Programs B (Community Service)
RC Makati Edsa



JAIME "Jimmy" A. CURA
RI Pres. Task Forces A
Operations, Metro South/Palawan
RC Rizal West

EDILBERTO"Bert" S. LINGAD
Vice Chairman, The Rotary Foundation
RC Makati North

RENATO "Rene" S. MAGADIA
District Treasurer
Chairman DISCON 2002
RC Makati North

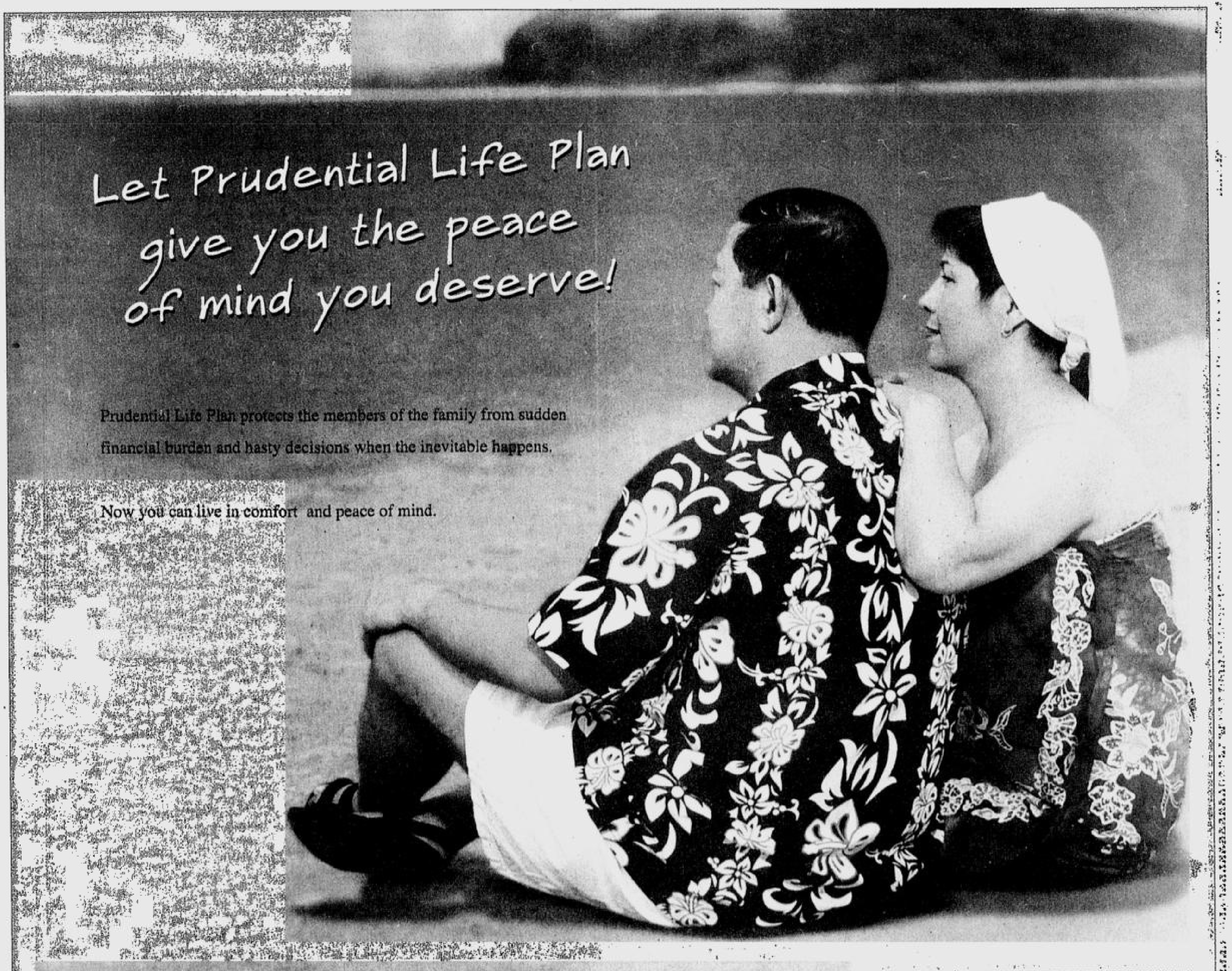


MARK ANTHONY "Mark" N. JAVIER
Operations, Makati Group
RC Makati West

EDUARDO "Ed" R. ALVAREZ
Group Head, RI Presidential Task Forces B
RC Makati West

MARIO "Mar" M. CASTILLO
Programs C (Vocational & YouthService)
RC Muntinlupa North

GREGORIO "Gerry" A. VERGARA
Membership Development
RC Parañaque



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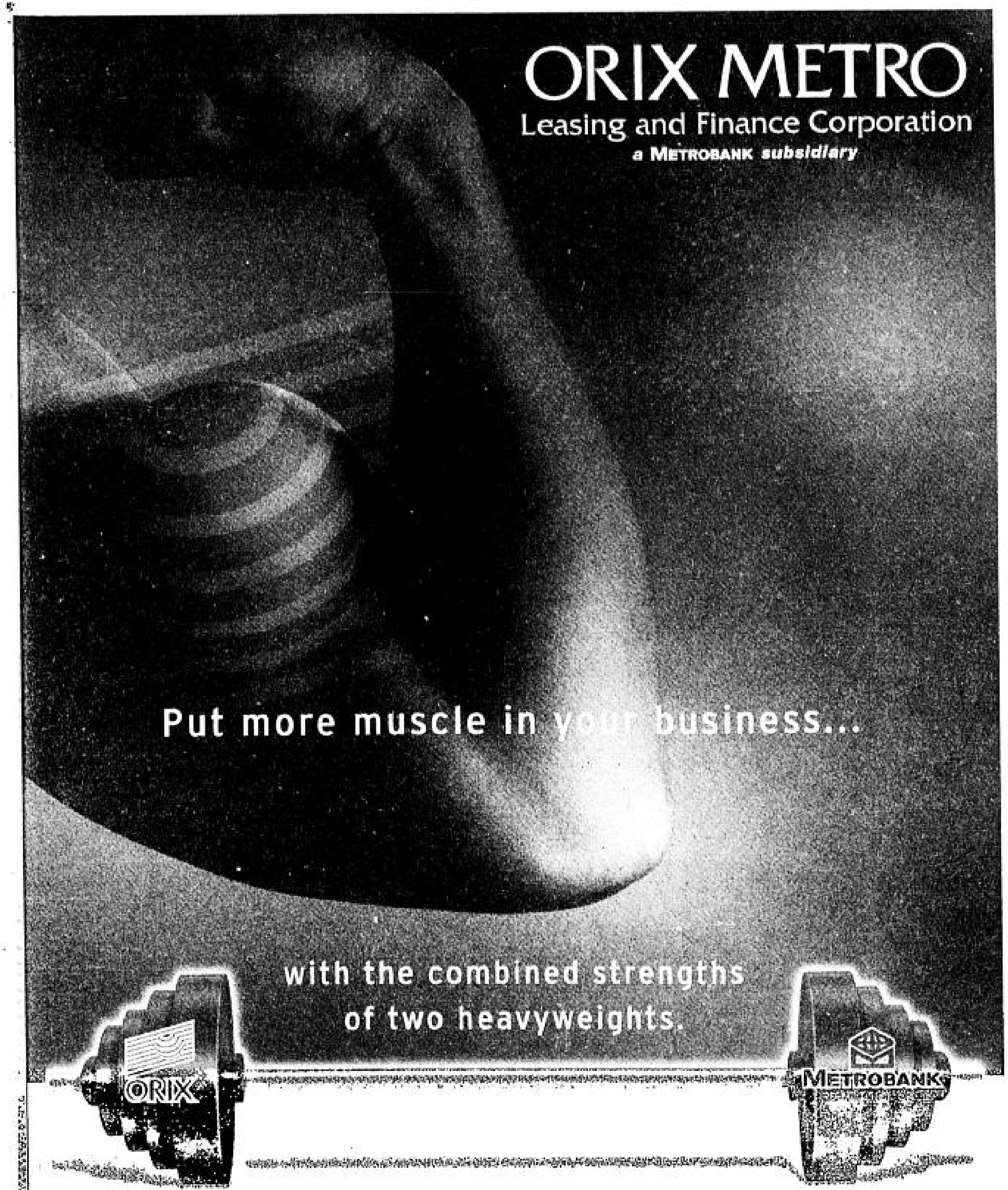
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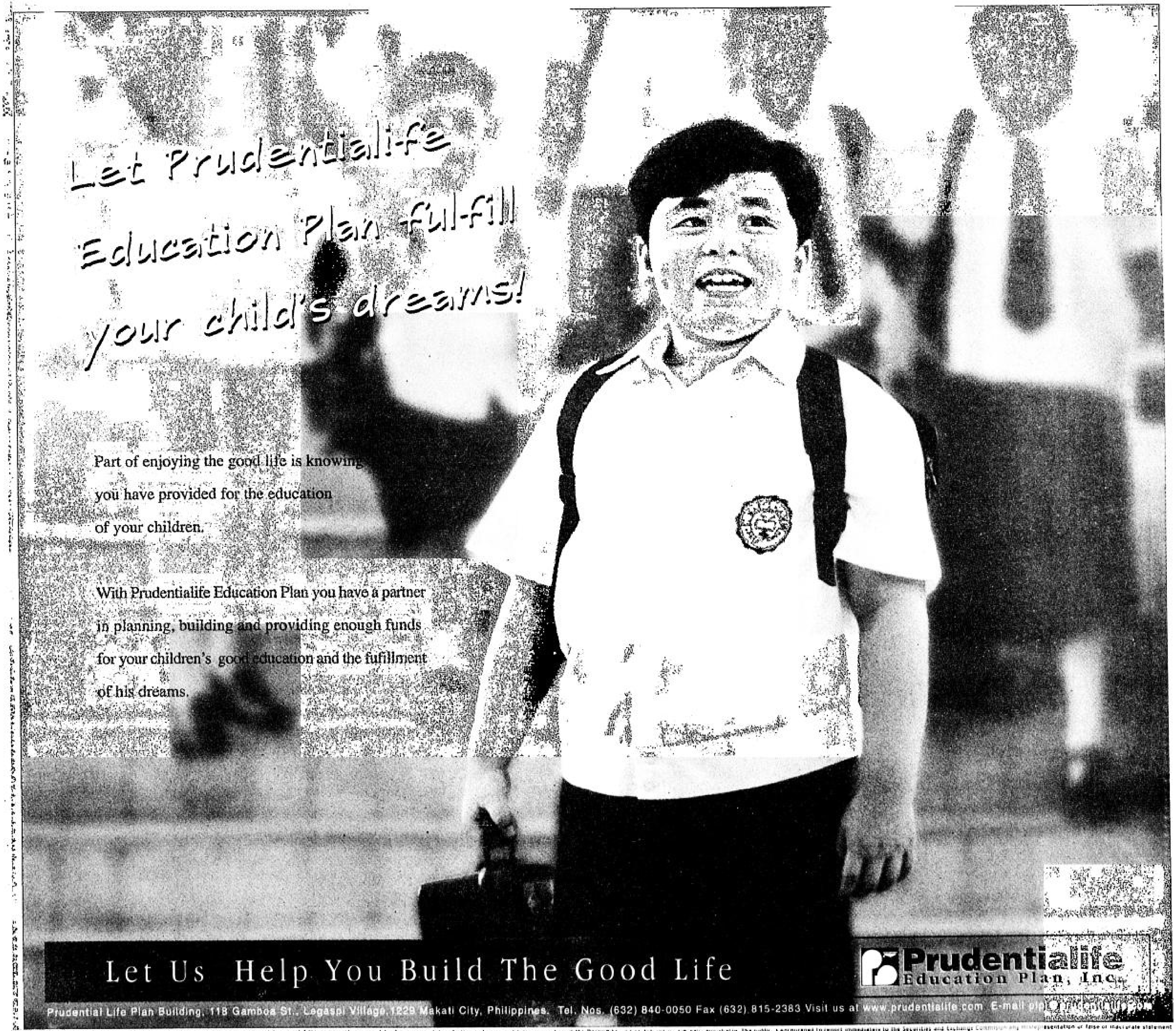

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Republic of the Philippines
LOCAL CIVIL REGISTRY OFFICE
PROVINCE OF MISAMIS ORIENTAL
Cagayan de Oro City

In the Matter of the Change of Name in the Certificate of Live Birth Marivic Pavonan Revilla — Petition Entry No.

NOTICE OF PUBLICATION

The public is hereby notified that MARIVIC PAVONAN REVILLA has filed with this Office a petition for CHANGE OF FIRST NAME FROM "MARIA VICTORIA TO MARIVIC" in the CERTIFICATE OF LIVE BIRTH of MARIVIC PAVONAN REVILLA

At the expense of the petitioner, let a copy of this petition be published at least once a week for two (2) consecutive weeks in a newspaper of national circulation. Any person having knowledge and or claiming interest or may be adversely affected by said petition may, within fifteen (15) calendar days, file his written opposition with this office

(Sgd.) LEO G. WABE
City Civil Registrar

(PDI--Feb. 27 & Mar. 6, 2002)

PUBLIC NOTICES

ANNOUNCEMENT

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AUCTION SALE

JAC FILIPINAS PAWNSHOP, INC. 100 C. Palanca St. Quiapo Manila will sell all unredeemed pledges for September 2001 on March 18, 2002 8:30am J. Lanuza-Auctioneer

NOTICE OF LOSS

Stock Cert. of CK Manufacturing Corp. SC #4 for 200, SC #13 for 100, SC #19 for 2000 & SC #1 for 600 SC #8 for 200, SC #12 for 800 No contest presented w/in 3 consecutive weeks of publication new cert. will be issued.
(PDI-Feb.20,27&Mar.6,2002)

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Republic of the Philippines
OFFICE OF THE MAYOR
City of Parañaque

INVITATION TO BID

The City Government of Parañaque is inviting interested parties/accredited suppliers to participate and submit sealed bids for the supply and delivery of the following:

SPORTS SUPPLIES

All sealed bids will be received by the Committee on Awards on or before 10:00 a.m. and then publicly opened at the City Conference Room at exactly 2:00 p.m. on March 22, 2002.

Interested parties/accredited suppliers may secure the necessary bid documents and information from the General Services Office.

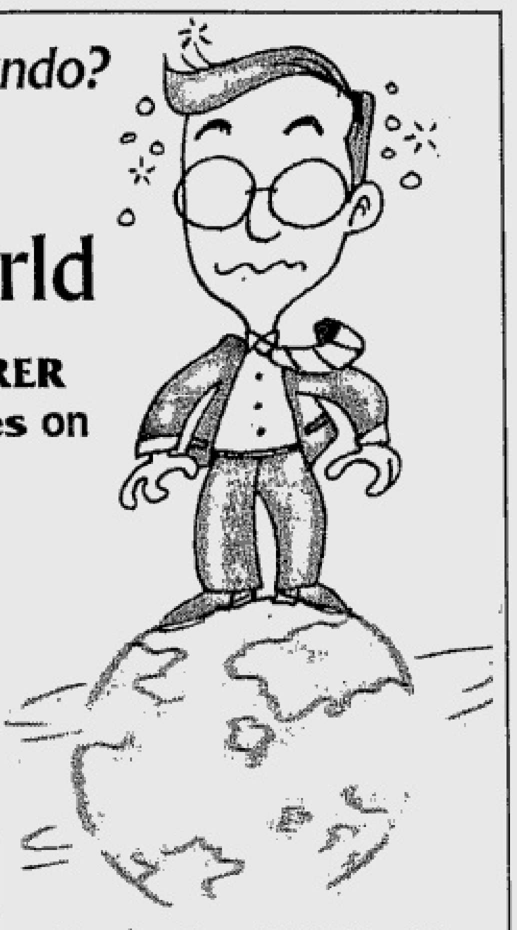
The City Government of Parañaque reserves the right to reject any or all bids, waive any formality or defect contained therein and accept the lowest complying and reasonable bid that is most advantageous to the City Government.

(Sgd.) JOEY P. MARQUEZ
City Mayor

(PDI - March 4, 6 & 8, 2002)

Nakakasabay ka ba sa ikot ng mundo?

Survive changes at work and in the world



Attend the PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER People *at* Work *Live!* Seminar Series on Change Management

March 18, 2002 (Monday)
MANAGING WORK-RELATED STRESS
Tita Datu Puangco, President, Ancilla Enterprise Development Consulting, Inc., will discuss the sources of stress in the workplace and how living the present moment will help you achieve more with less strain. She will share the key to enjoying work which is living "the rainbow life" to ensure an integrated and balanced life.

March 19, 2002 (Tuesday)
SURVIVING WORKPLACE CHANGE
Lirio O. Mapa, Vice President, Center for Leadership and Change, Inc., will talk about how you can prepare yourself for changes. She will also tackle the paradigms and principles that can help you survive workplace changes.

March 20, 2002 (Wednesday)
LEADING ORGANIZATIONAL CHANGE
Mark Mackenzie, Managing Principal, S & G International Consulting, Inc., will focus on how you can lead change, not just from the senior management perspective, but from those in all levels of the organization. He will discuss how different types of change are identified, measured and managed by all employees.

TIME: 5:30 p.m. - 8:00 p.m.
VENUE: Santiago Hall, Mezzanine, Equitable PCIB Tower 1, Makati Ave. cor. H. V. de la Costa St., Makati City, Metro Manila.

REGISTRATION FEES PER SESSION: P250 (balcony), P300 (orchestra) and P350 (patron), Early bird discount of 10%, Limited discounted tickets for teachers, gov't. employees (25%) & students (50%)

REGISTER at the following Inquirer Classified Ads branches: Main-Pasong Tamo, Makati City, 897-8808/ 897-2535; G/F Atrium Bldg., Makati Ave., Makati City 811-4361/ 811-4370/ 811-4012; St. Anthony's Bldg., Aurora Blvd, Cubao, Quezon City 421-1420/421-0343; SM Megamall, Mandaluyong City 635-0219/ 637-2008; G/F Trinity Bldg., 636 T.M. Kalaw St., Manila 527-3342/ 528-0183/ 527-6357 *or at the* **Optimus Managers and Advisors,Inc.** *office* 2nd flr., Benjamin I Bldg., 62 Sgt. Esguerra St. cor. Mo. Ignacia Ave. (across ABS-CBN), South Triangle, Quezon City 414-0186, 414-0587.

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Republic of the Philippines
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION & COMMUNICATIONS
EDSA LRT PROJECT MANAGEMENT OFFICE

Tuloy-tuloy sa Pagsulong

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

The Department of Transportation and Communications and the Metro Rail Transit Corporation, in cooperation with the local government of Kalookan City, will be conducting a public hearing which shall be held on 07 March 2002 at 1:00 PM on the proposed alignment of the MRT III Extension from North Avenue in Quezon City to Monumento in Kalookan City.

The venue of the hearing shall be at "Bulwagang Katipunan" of the City Hall of Kalookan City.

All interested parties are hereby invited to attend the said public hearing.

(Sgd.) **MARIO C. MIRANDA**
Project Director

(PDI – Mar. 6, 2002)

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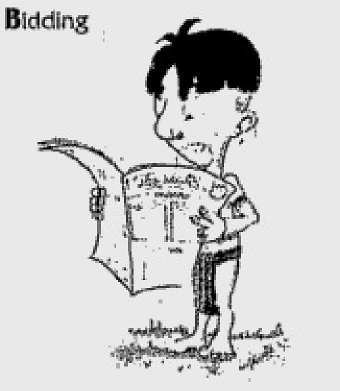

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EasyCall 141-207264
Mr. Rodolfo D. Gregorio
263 Rizal Street, Tarcan, Baliwag, Bulacan
Tel No (044) 766-1250
Office: Care Communications
Baliwag Shopping Center
2nd Floor BJG Building, Bameza Street
Poblacion, Baliwag, Bulacan
Cell No (0919) 407-0046
Cabanatuan City
Mr. Ruel Capule
#7 Santander Street, Kapt. Pepe Subdivision
Cabanatuan City, Nueva Ecija
Tel No (044) 463-0823
Mr. Hayward Pablo
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OBITUARIES

I am the way, the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me.
John 14:6

WE MISS YOU, PAPA!

But we know you are home in the loving arms of the Eternal Father. We remember you on your Tenth Anniversary with Holy Masses in the churches where you prayed:

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Albay Cathedral, Cubao,
Sta. Cruz, Quiapo,
EDSA Shrine

Judge Eugenio Guan Jr.
30 August 1930 - 6 March 1992

We continue your legacy of loving one another, serving our country with the preferential option for the poor, living in truth, humility and justice.

WE LOVE YOU..... FOREVER!

Your wife, BABA
Your children: Maliz & Ferdie, Malyne & Arli, Jojo, Melky & Dung, Concon, Leo
Your grandchildren: Bea, Giulu, Huey (Eugenio III) & Danielle.

NAPOLEON T. DAROY

January 9, 1937 - February 26, 2002

His bereaved wife **Warlita**; children **Cyril, Jocelyn, Adrian, Jinky & Napoleon Jr.**; brothers and sisters **Erlinda D. Esquillo, Josefina D. Velasco, Rose D. Loreto, Leah D. de Leon, Dr. Jose T. Daroy Jr., Belen D. Dazo, Arnulfo T. Daroy**, relatives and friends request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

Interment today, March 6, 2002 at the Mapandan Catholic Cemetery after the 9:00 a.m. Mass at the St. Joseph Parish Church, Mapandan, Pangasinan.

In Loving Memory
of the **First Death Anniversary**
of our beloved **"INANG"**

AUREA STA. ANA CANSANA

wife of the late **Tirso H. Cansana** *of Pasig City.*

We, her children **Juaning** (†) & **Ben**; **Bining** & **Lina, Minyang** & **Nato, Narding** & **Choly, Atel** & **Lito, Cesar** & **Sony**; her grandchildren, great grandchildren and other relatives request the pious readers to remember her in their prayers.

Holy Masses will be offered today, 6:00 a.m. at Immaculate Conception Church and Palatiw Parish Church, Pasig City and Dambanang Kawayan, Tipas, Taguig at 6:00 p.m.

An obituary with a picture can be a fitting tribute to your departed loved one.

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ADONIS F. FABRA

August 16, 1963 - March 5, 2002

The bereaved family request the pious readers to say a little prayer for the repose of his soul.

The body lies at Holy Trinity Funeral Homes Sucat, Parañaque.

Interment will be at Manila Memorial Sucat, Parañaque on March10, 2002, 10:00 a.m. Holy Mass will be offered at 9:00 a.m.

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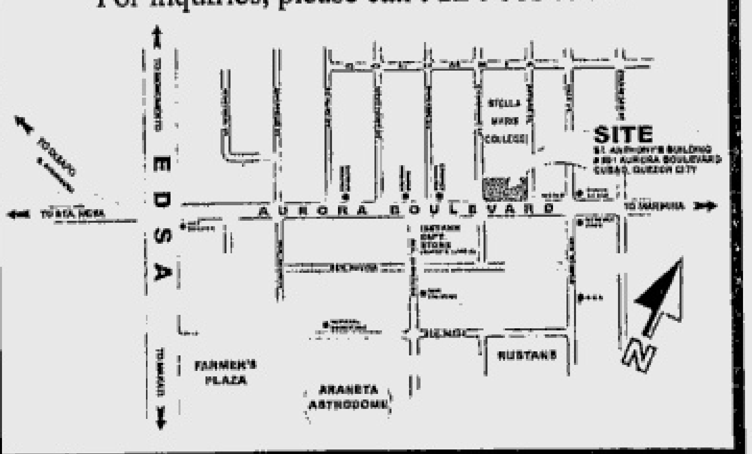


How do you network if you are shy?

WORKING WOUNDED

Bob Rosner

DEAR WW: I'm a regular reader of your column and I generally like your advice. But recently I read an article you wrote on networking. The advice was fine, but only for extroverts. How do you network if you are shy?

Shy But Not Retiring

Have you heard about Front Sight, NV? It's a new housing development with 177 lots, 12 shooting ranges and, believe it or not, each lot also comes with an Uzi. Some of you probably think that this gives new meaning to the phrase, the "Wild West." But Ignatius Piazza sees it differently; he believes he's creating "the safest town in America."

Just as you wouldn't want to be without a gun in Front Sight, you go into battle at work unarmed if you're not constantly networking. That's how things get done in the corporate world. But rather than freezing over anxious thoughts of cold-calling strangers, think of the tips below in terms of building a community of friends. For more, check out "A Foot in the Door" by Katherine Hanson (10 Speed, 2000).

- Do you start with people that you know? Most networks start with a simple foundation—people that you already know. Seek out former coworkers, college classmates, members of your religious group, and anyone that you've ever done a favor for. Tell them about your work interests and encourage them to introduce you to people who might be able to help your cause.
- Can you meet with people one-on-one? Networking functions and meetings can be very intimidating. So start small—with one-on-one meetings with people that you already know. Hopefully, when you discover that they don't bite, the next round of calls will be even easier.
- Can you lay groundwork before you call? Breaking the ice is tough, so start with a letter of introduction to the person you'd like to meet with. Your letter can serve as a framework for your conversation; for example, you can list some of the questions that you'd like to ask them. You'll still have to talk, but at least it might take some pressure off those first few minutes of the meeting.
- Can the person who is referring you make an introductory call? It might make you a bit uncomfortable to ask, but trust me, it's wonderful when someone sets the table by getting the contact person on the phone before you meet. Just hearing their voice, and that they'd like to meet, should help your confidence.
- Do you develop a script? I've personally never been accused of being shy, but if a meeting is important enough, I'll draft a rough script of what I'd like to say. It can really help to reduce anxiety and help you out if your mind goes blank, mid-meeting.
- Go out with a buddy? Sometimes there is strength in numbers. By going out with a friend you don't have to worry about carrying half of the conversation.

Don't shoot blanks with your career. Learn how to create safe ways to get out there and network.

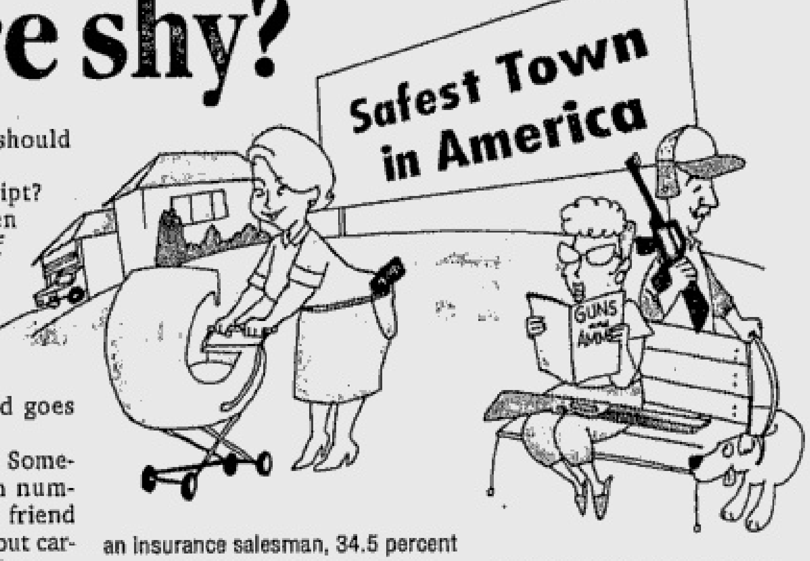


ILLUSTRATION BY: ALBERT RODRIGUEZ

Here are the results from a recent workingwounded.com/ABCnews.com online ballot: The hardest thing about networking...

—Finding the time, 4.9 percent

—Finding the motivation, 16 percent

—Finding a way to not sound like an insurance salesman, 34.5 percent

—Finding the right people, 44.4 percent

Our winning strategy for networking when you are shy comes from Kathie H. in Tacoma, WA. "Go to every networking event—whether business or social—with your 'agenda' ready—things you have to share with this specific group and things you'd love to find out from them. A win-win idea. Writing it down ahead of time (and the writing it is key for me) makes sure I have things to talk about and will walk away from an event with value. Also, think of yourself as a host—your job is to make others feel comfortable by introducing them to people, etc. It shifts the focus from you and what you need and makes talking to people much easier."

(Send feedback to bob@workingwounded.com)

Ask employers to promote work/life balance

WORKING MOM

An Mercado Alcantara

WHEN moms entered the formal work force some 20 years ago, we had to break into a man's world. The biggest challenge was not simply to get there but to be accepted as equally talented, equally hard working, equally professional. Then, we broke through the glass ceiling and found out success was not worth it unless we could take our families with us.

So we launched into our balancing acts, seeking and demanding ways that we could spend more time with our families without compromising our productivity at work. It was the beginning of the search for work-life balance. Progressive companies offered on-site day-care, medical benefits for dependents, and special emergency leaves for parenting concerns. At the forefront of these changes were mothers who were willing to speak up and negotiate for their needs.

Today, even as we're still convincing employers that giving us more time with our families will give the company greater productivity, we're already revolutionizing the way people see their work. Pioneering companies, concerned with attracting the best talents in their industry, are beginning to see that work-life balance is not just a working mom's issue—it is the right of everybody and anybody who works.

Milestone event

In a milestone conference spearheaded by the Ayala Foundation, the Personnel Management Association of the Philippines and the Ford Foundation, work-life advocates got together last Feb. 28 to rediscover the path to work-life harmony.

The Work-Life Project is a concept developed to increase opportunities for balance *within* and *beyond* the workplace. It was a whole day of consultation and soul-searching among CEOs, change managers and human resource practitioners to find out what we can do within our organizations to create a culture that would foster the total development of individuals.

At the core of the day's activities were focus group discussions where participants talked about what steps their organizations were already taking to help its members effectively balance their life priorities. The discussions were honest and passionate. Again, at the forefront were inspiring stories about working moms who fought for change in the workplace.

Special benefits

One story was about a female chief finance officer at a multinational company who chose to pass off a much-coveted promotion because she believed that the job would take too much time away from her children. She knew her priorities and chose accordingly. But because the company was so convinced she was the right person for the job, they put together a set of benefits to give her more time for the family: she got additional leave credits, flexi-time arrangements, and work-at-home privileges. Her company turned on its head to please her because they believed she was worth it. And because she told them where she drew the line, they knew just how to respond to her needs. She accepted the promotion and delivered astounding productivity results to the company. She also set a precedent for other working moms in her company. How willing is your company to do the same for you?

Push for change

In a work-life survey conducted by the Employers Confederation of the Philippines and the Personnel Management Association of the Philippines, 92 percent of respondents said they were sensitive to the lives of their employees outside of work. In other words, nine out of 10 companies said they would like to help employees achieve work-life balance. Most of them said, however, that granting benefits was conditional. They will only act if asked. In short, unless more people, especially working moms, would speak up and push for change, conditions will remain the same.

What about you? What are you willing to do to integrate your life priorities with your work? Speak up. Explore the options available to you. In a constructive and collaborative way, discuss with your superiors and your colleagues what makes it difficult for you to strike a balance. Also, affirm what helps you integrate work and family life. A simple chat could be the start of big changes in your life.

Tell me what you and your organization are doing to promote work-life balance. Write to me at *workingmom@pinoycentral.com.*

(An Mercado-Alcantara is editor-in-chief of the magazine Metro Working Mom *published monthly by ABS-CBN Publishing. Get more working mom tips in the March issue of MWM with Eula Valdez and Jean Garcia on the cover.)*

MARIANO Ang (fifth from right), president of Rotary Club Quezon City North and Microdata Systems and Management, Inc., is congratulated by Philam CEO Jose Cuisia, Jr. for Rotary's donation of books for the children of Basilan under the Aid for Basilan Children (ABC) Fund program. The ABC Fund is supported by Philam and the Philippine Business for Social Progress.

Leaders needs to be creative

RECIPES *for* LEARNING

Moje Ramos Aquino

CREATIVITY, according to Webster's Ninth New Collegiate Dictionary, is the power to be creative; marked by the ability or power to create. Creativity is decidedly an important leadership competency according to Patricia Guggenheimer and Mary Diana Szulc, authors of "Understanding Leadership Competencies." They write:

"Some companies foster creativity by constructing an environment that allows employees to unleash their talents while at the same time eliminating potential barriers. 'Places don't create, people do,' is an oft-said aphorism. While this is true, it is also true that a place can help or assist a person to be more creative.

"Hallmark Cards built the Hallmark Innovation Center to foster creativity in innovation by providing a stimulating environment. The environment allowed different groups of employees to easily exchange ideas. The building is adjacent to the main Hallmark facility at corporate headquarters. It is accessible from the main building, but still, it is a separate structure.

"Creativity involves people talking together—sometimes in an office, sometimes in a lab, sometimes over a cup of coffee. Such creative brainstorming is what the Innovation Center is all about."

Collaboration is one key way to foster creativity. You may not have access to a separate creative facility; however, you can walk over to the next desk or cubicle and discuss a concept with a coworker or colleague. You can call a friend or send an e-mail message. Through conversation and more structured techniques like brainstorming and mind mapping you can find solutions that may have appeared to be elusive.

Some people need 3D objects or blocks, some people doodle or draw, some use the computer. Whatever your vehicle to stimulate creativity, you may find you are more creative than you originally thought. That creativity helps you to consider options and ultimately to progress in your personal and leadership growth and development.

Sometimes you need to jumpstart the creative process, by engaging your brain in a different thought process. Consider using mind mapping as a tool to stimulate your creativity.

Other methods of creativity involve brainstorming, utilizing a round-robin, playing games, working with a colleague, setting up an innovation center, going to an art museum for inspiration and holding think-tank sessions.

Here are some tips on Mind Mapping:

- Use just key words, or wherever possible images.
- Start from the center of the page and work out.
- Make the center a clear and strong visual image that depicts the general theme of the map.
- Create sub-centers for sub-themes.
- Put key words on lines. This reinforces structure of notes.
- Print rather than write in script. It makes them more readable and memorable. Lower case is more visually distinctive (and better remembered) than upper case.
- Use color to depict themes, associations and to make things stand out.
- Anything that stands out on the page will stand out in your mind.
- Think three-dimensionally.
- Use arrows, icons or other visual aids to show links between different elements.
- Don't get stuck in one area. If you dry up in one area, go to another branch.
- Put ideas down as they occur, wherever they fit. Don't judge or hold back.
- Break boundaries. If you run out of space, don't start a new sheet; paste more paper onto the map (break the 8x11 mentality).
- Be creative. Creativity aids memory.
- Get involved. Have fun.

An example of a mind map is seen in Figure A. Steps in Mind Mapping are outlined in Figure B.

By the way, we are doing an Innovation Camp this April. We are still working on the administrative details. Please watch this column for further information.

(Send feedback to *Moje.Ramos@Aquino.ZZN.com*)

Figure A. Sample of a Mind Map

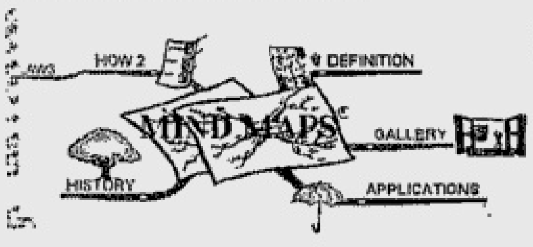
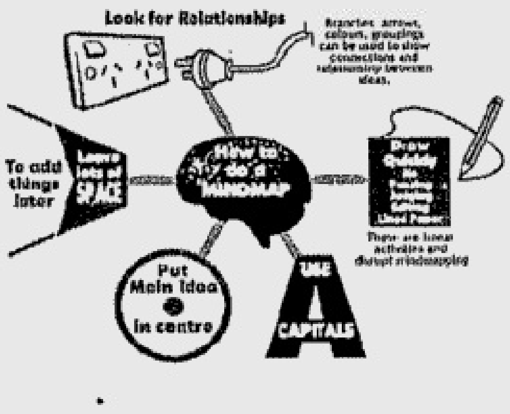
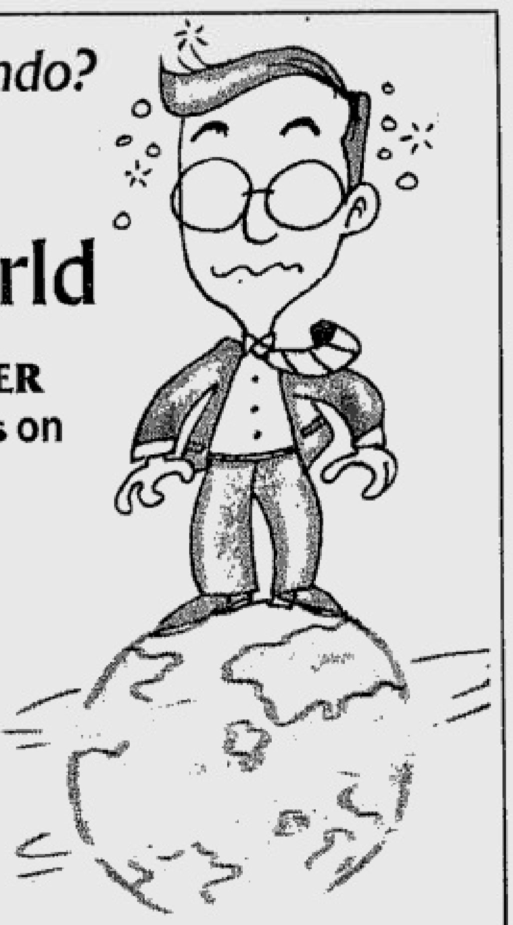


Figure B. Steps in Mind Mapping


Look for Relationships
Brackets, arrows, colours, groupings can be used to show connections and relationships between ideas.
To add things later
SPACE
How to do a MINDMAP
These are linear activities and disrupt mindmapping
Put Main Idea in centre
USE CAPITALS

Nakakasabay ka ba sa ikot ng mundo?

Survive changes at work and in the world



Attend the PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER People *at* Work *Live!* Seminar Series on Change Management

March 18, 2002 (Monday)
MANAGING WORK-RELATED STRESS
Tita Datu Puangco, President, Ancilla Enterprise Development Consulting, Inc., will discuss the sources of stress in the workplace and how living the present moment will help you achieve more with less strain. She will share the key to enjoying work which is living "the rainbow life" to ensure an integrated and balanced life.

March 19, 2002 (Tuesday)
SURVIVING WORKPLACE CHANGE
Lirio O. Mapa, Vice President, Center for Leadership and Change, Inc., will talk about how you can prepare yourself for changes. She will also tackle the paradigms and principles that can help you survive workplace changes.

March 20, 2002 (Wednesday)
LEADING ORGANIZATIONAL CHANGE
Mark Mackenzie, Managing Principal, S & G International Consulting, Inc., will focus on how you can lead change, not just from the senior management perspective, but from those in all levels of the organization. He will discuss how different types of change are identified, measured and managed by all employees.

TIME: 5:30 p.m. - 8:00 p.m.
VENUE: Santiago Hall, Mezzanine, Equitable PCIB Tower 1, Makati Ave. cor. H. V. de la Costa St., Makati City, Metro Manila.

REGISTRATION FEES PER SESSION: P250 (balcony), P300 (orchestra) and P350 (patron), Early bird discount of 10%, Limited discounted tickets for teachers, gov't. employees (25%) & students (50%)

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PEOPLE at WORK

Editor **Raul O. Marcelo** ◈ *Subsection Editor* **Regina Galang Reyes**

Young doctor decides to go abroad

By Tita Datu Puangco

> People who take up medicine have to know the real score

Advice
FOR THE ANXIOUS PERSON AT WORK

YOUR article last Feb. 27 could not be truer. I am a relatively young MD practicing in a prestigious hospital for the last six years here in Manila. I graduated from the premier medical school and underwent residency training from the premier training university hospital here in the Philippines. I obtained fellowship training at one of the best university hospitals in the United States. Even with these credentials, being a good doctor, and even being in a good hospital, does not guarantee that one can survive on his/her income as a doctor.

My nephew, who is a management trainee at a foreign bank in the Philippines, earns even more than I. Please tell the confused mother that her plan for her daughter to be a doctor is not a good one. She should allow her to do what she wants. I personally do not want my children to be doctors here in the Philippines. They will only starve. I am lucky that my wife and I still have financial support from our parents even though we are nearing our 40s. It is not due to our incompetence that this is the situation.

There are many factors that have caused the decline of doctors' incomes through the years. One is the oversupply of doctors and specialists nationwide. Two, health management organizations. Three is the compassion for the poor such that even if we are being paid ridiculously low, doctors do not complain. Four, the general economic downturn of the country limiting the paying power of the people.

We will be part of the quiet exodus of doctors from the Philippines. The economy cannot sustain all of us. It is nice to know some people do understand the real situation. Thank you very much. God Bless You.

Disappointed Doctor

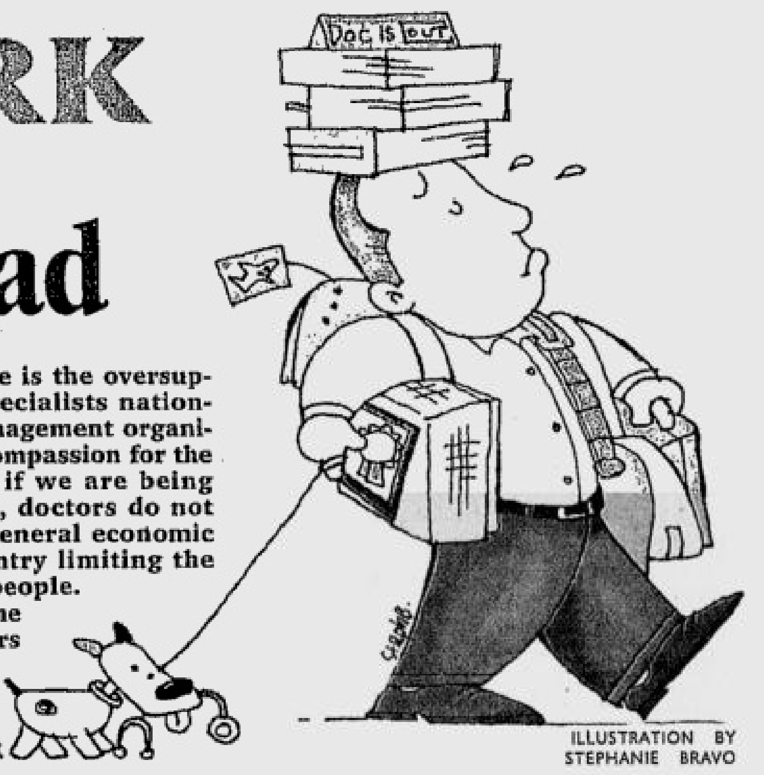

ILLUSTRATION BY STEPHANIE BRAVO

Thank you for your letter. I cried reading it. I cried for our country. It will lose an idealistic and compassionate doctor like you to a more developed country. And yet we are in dire need of doctors, especially in the far-flung rural areas. The Department of Health can attest to this. And yet doctors have to live and provide good futures for their children. This is the reason most doctors work in the cities and provincial capitals. What can be done about the situation?

Ideas exchange

One is probably this exchange of ours at People at Work. People who take up medicine have to know the real score, so they do not study with bloated expectations. I think it is realistic for them to compute the return on their investment knowing the cost of getting an MD. We know that most of them are motivated by the altruism of the profession. But they likewise have to deal with the harsh realities.

Two, the Philippine Medical Association might want to address these issues head on. We know the changing structure of the health care industry. Why not examine and do a competitive analysis so that the association can better position the profession vis-à-vis other competitive factors? The time has come to address the needs of young doctors and give them an opportunity to learn, grow and prosper.

Three, can the government do something in terms of lowering the cost of medical education and making the curriculum more relevant to the needs of rural areas? Can the government plan forward in terms of manpower requirements of the country?

Manpower planning

In corporations, we spend substantial effort doing manpower planning. Today, I am aware that this is being done for technical skills. Why not do it also for the professions? How many accountants, lawyers, doctors are needed in the next five years? How many do we already have? If this information is made available, then children and parents can make more enlightened decisions. Education is a major investment that eats up a big part of every family's budget. As a country, we cannot afford to waste limited resources, simply because college students are enrolled in courses that go nowhere in terms of employment.

Four, is there a way for students interested in taking up medicine to receive counseling? The medical schools might want to do their part to make sure persons enrolling in the course understand the challenges and difficulties ahead side by side with the rewards and fulfillment the profession brings.

Wishing you only the best as you prepare to go abroad to work. May God fulfill your dreams and hope for a better life.

(Ms Puangco is CEO and president of Ancilla Enterprise Development Consulting. Send comments, feedback or requests for advice through e-mail to ancillaedc@ pacific.net.ph *or fax to 892-2902.)*

metro ABS-CBN
Working mom
March 2002 Vol. 2, No. 3
ACCEPT YOUR ANGER
SUMMER IS HERE!
30
WIN THE OFFICE WAR
MAKEUP SHY
Fashion Finds For The Petite & Plump
Gimik Guidelines For Paranoid Parents
SECRET POWERS

PEOPLE AT WORK, METRO WORKING MOM TEAM UP FOR MOTHERS AT WORK

LAST Feb. 6, Metro Working Mom Editor-in-Chief An Mercado-Alcantara started her weekly *Working Mom* column in this section to address the concerns of our working mom readers. In the March issue of Metro Working Mom, People at Work Editor Regina Galang Reyes starts her monthly *People at Work* column with the article, "Can we break the glass ceiling?" This editorial exchange firms up the tie-up of Philippine Daily Inquirer's People at Work and ABS-CBN Publishing's Metro Working Mom to provide more media venues for issues and concerns of people at work. The March issue of Metro Working Mom featuring Jean Garcia and Eula Valdez on the cover is now available at newsstands and stores.

"The future belongs to those who believe in the beauty of their dreams."

Eleanor Roosevelt

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THE C2 WAITRESSING CHALLENGE

'Can I take your order, sir?'

CHER takes orders.

MAUI, don't spill anything.

HAPPY'S balancing act

For a night, the 2bU! staff get to be on the other side of the ordering game as they pose as restaurant and bar servers with mixed results

Photos by Romy Homillada

I LOVE eating out. I'd like to think that I'm a fairly easy customer to have. I don't make unbelievable demands. I don't steal cutlery. And when my food takes too long to be served, I don't get nasty. I'm always polite. And I tip (shouldn't everybody?). Nothing earth-shaking or eye-popping, but since no waiter or waitress has hit me at the back of the head with a plate, I guess I tip okay.

One night, the tables (trays, glasses, utensils, etc.) were turned. Us frequent resto-hoppers got the chance to be waiter and waitresses.

It was more complicated than I had thought.

That night, as I made my way to C2 wearing my *lola*'s white long-sleeved shirt (I could not believe I do not have a single long-sleeved shirt in my closet. My wardrobe needs major rethinking.), I started contemplating if I hadn't bitten more than I could chew. Waiting on tables hadn't exactly been one of my career options, especially since I could just be the clumsiest oaf in the world. I constantly stumble over my own shadow. And as long as it was liquid, I could spill it. Carrying my tray from the counter of a fast-food restaurant to my own seat was a feat for me (heartfelt apologies to the crew of the Burger King branch where I spilled root beer on the counter). I had this mental picture of me bringing trays of food to hungry people only to stumble and have everything crashing on the floor. I could see the disdained look on the hungry people's faces. And the annoyance of the manager and waiters. Yikes. Double yikes.

Add to that the fact that I was fighting the flu that night. My knees were weak and I felt hardly capable of walking, much less carrying trays of food. But I'm not one to back off. I was going to do it, even if it soaked up my remaining energy.

Over good food, we got a crash course in efficient service. We were oriented on table and seat numbering, on what to say when the customer's order wasn't available. We went through the menu and got used to reading the French words until the names rolled off our tongues like honey. Then, as fast as that, it was show time.

In many ways, we cheated.

Real waiters don't get to sample the goods in abundance ahead of the customers. But that's what we did. Chef Greg Singian III whipped up excellent dishes for them and a special vegetarian dish for me—the gratinated eggplant, cheese and tomato couscous. The flambé we had to end the meal with was yummy.

Real waiters don't have assistants. But we did. C2's real waiters showed us the ropes. Jhun Reyes, who has been a waiter for a year and a half, showed extreme patience as he told me how to use the OS (that's order slips for you) and where to put them after. Darwin Asuncion, who has been in the business for less than a year,

CAN/ p.C2

THE SURVIVORS

The uniform does it

"UM, does anyone have a sewing kit?"

That was one of the first things I said when I got to C2, a fine-dining restaurant where the 2bU! core were supposed to be waitressing for the night. I got there 10 minutes late, thanks to the impromptu-shopping trip I did two hours before, simply because I didn't have the required uniform in my closet—a white blouse and black pants. "Panic buying" was an understatement (my guy friend who accompanied me lamented that I shopped "like a guy")—I'd try on something and inform the saleslady I was getting that piece. Now since Bayo said that their new stocks had not been ironed, I bought the white shirt off the rack, only to have all the buttons (and I mean *all* the buttons) pop off the minute I entered the restaurant. (May I mention the disgusting man on the elevator who noticed it before me and didn't tell me that my top buttons were gone?) I felt like crying, until Happy, for some reason, whipped out a sewing kit from her bag.

And so started my evening as a waitress. I was convinced my night would be a disaster after my shirt incident (when it rains, it pours). Thankfully, it wasn't as bad as I thought it would be.

Chef Greg presented us our menus, and the briefing begun. The cramming session included pronouncing the menu items correctly, pointing out the bestsellers, taking down orders and numbering each table. I was excited and scared at the same time—my friend knew me for criticizing how waiters couldn't do anything right, and now I was going to be one of *them* (did I mention what a humbling experience this was?).

Our dinner was served first, and I couldn't keep my hands off the nachos and cold mussels, which I later found out had wasabe in them; this explained why my nose would clear up every now and then. I fell in love with the lamb. Although the serving was quite small, it definitely ranks first on my list of food to be tried out at this restaurant. The Gindara was just as scrumptious. Chef Greg prepared mango crêpe for us, topped with Häagen Dasz ice cream (of course, I stole the cherry off everyone's crêpe).

After dinner, our work began. I have to be honest—there hardly was anyone there. A function-party was being held for a Knight Diver's Club, and I could only remember three men enjoying the free local beer by the bar. I got to take some people's orders, though. Jhun, my "mentor," was teaching me the ropes of being a waiter, which boosted my confidence level.

Mostly we'd just hang by the bar and pray for people to come in so we'd have something to do. At some point I decided to check out the kitchen to see where the magic happened. It was almost closing time, so there hardly was any food to look at (and possibly taste-test). I ended the night by sharing a beer with Cher, and then I was off to curse my white shirt.

I have to sum up my experience.

1.) Steer clear of drunken old creeps. I saw it in a movie once—a bartender teaching a rookie how to sell more beers. "Keep them talking, but always leave room for more conversation, so they keep buying beer." I tried out the technique ("Oh you want my phone number? Buy a beer and maybe I'll tell you."), but instead got scolded at by Jules the bartender when the drunken man called out to give me a beer.

2.) Never rely on what other rookie waiters tell you. Cher at one point said, "They're asking for the bill!" I only waited on one table, so when she told me that, I initially thought she meant *my* table. So I got their bill. Turns out they didn't ask for the bill (which made me turn three shades of red when I was told this by the *customer*), and it was *another* table that Happy was waiting on that asked for the bill.

3.) Never underestimate the bartender/waiter/cashier. I know I do this *all* the time—practically everywhere I go. You have to admit that there are employees who seem to hate their jobs, but there are some who love what they do. Just taking down a person's order made me so anxious that I felt the need for a confidence pill. The waiters had to make sure the cook had the order down in less than 15 minutes (drinks in 5), and the bartenders had so much to do behind the bar, it was a miracle they got everyone's orders right. Did I mention the cashier? How on earth were they able to read waiters' handwritings?

4.) Never go last-minute shopping. My friend still laughs at the image of me with a white blouse, black pants and denim sneakers (since I didn't feel the need to buy leather shoes).

Maui Reyes

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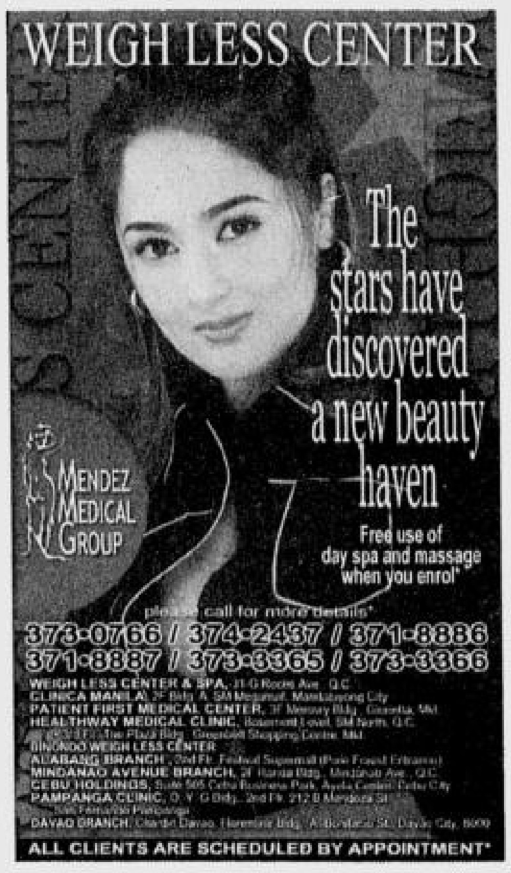

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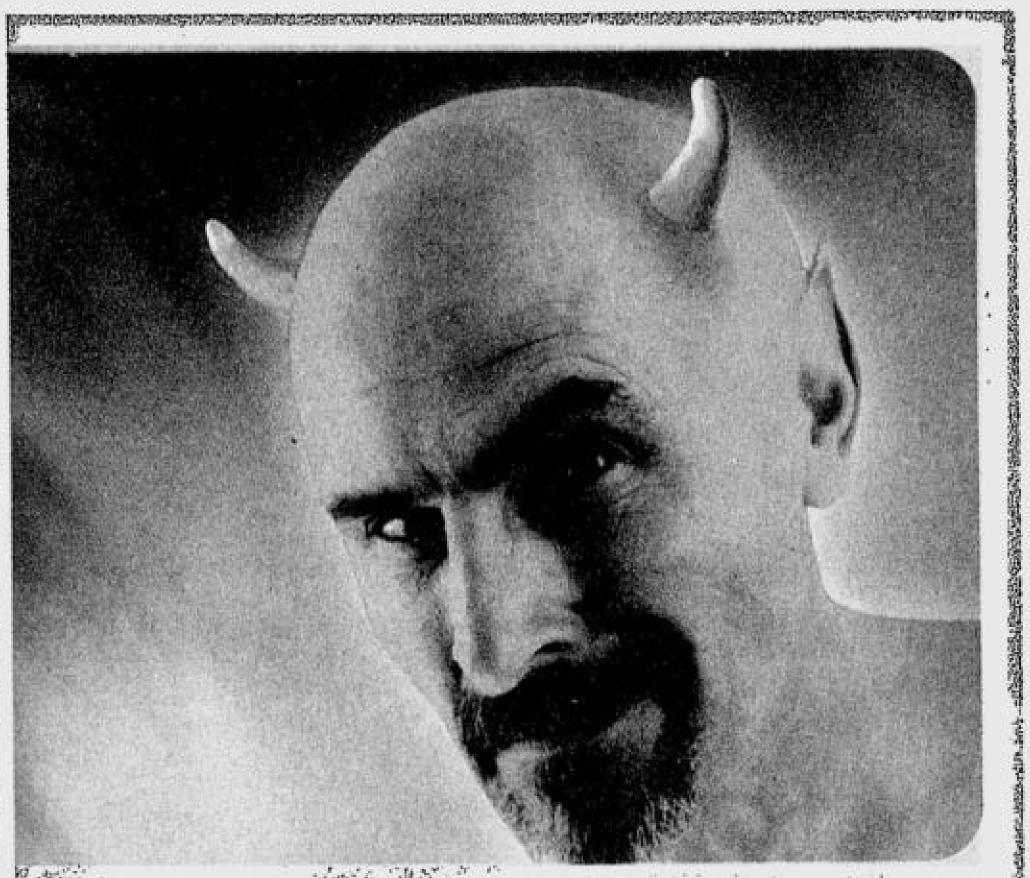

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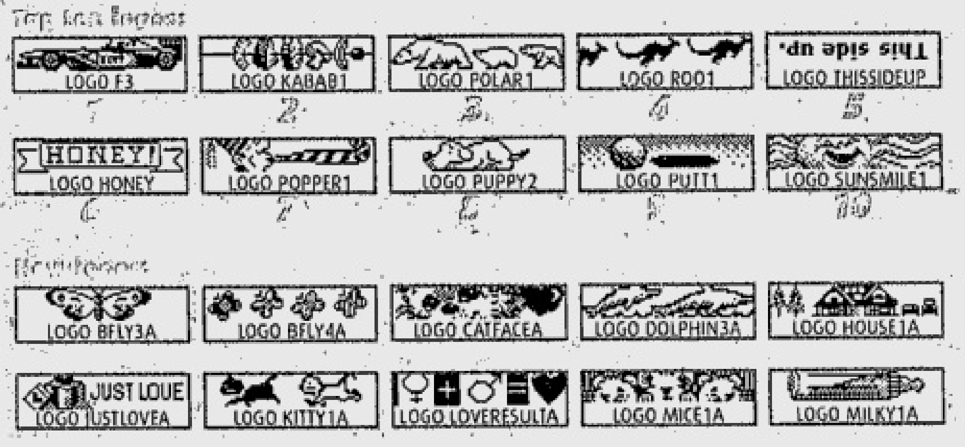

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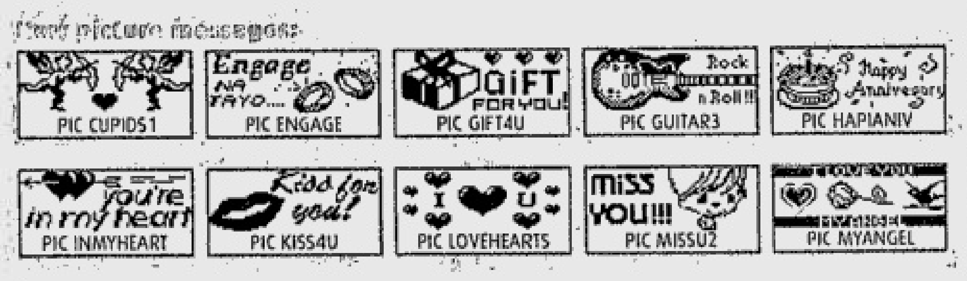

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Sinasamba Kita	*Rey Valera*	**TONE SINASAMBAA**
Katawan	*Hagibis*	**TONE KATAWANA**
Lalake	*Hagibis*	**TONE LALAKEA**
Legs	*Hagibis*	**TONE LEGSA**
Mr. Kengkoy	*Mike Hanopol*	**TONE KENGKOYA**
Nanggigigil	*Hagibis*	**TONE NANGGIGILA**
No Touch	*Mike Hanopol*	**TONE NOTOUCHA**

Top ten ring tones

1	Superman	*Five For Fighting*	**TONE SUPERMANS**
2	Smooth	*Santana*	**TONE SMOOTHSAN**
3	Might Be You	*Stephen Bishop*	**TONE MYTBU**
4	Sana	*Florante*	**TONE SANA**
5	One Last Cry	*Bryan McKnight*	**TONE 1LASTCRY**
6	Getting To Know You	*King And I*	**TONE GETNG2KNW**
7	Head Over Heels	*Go Go's*	**TONE HEDOVRHIL**
8	Intimacy		**TONE INTIMACY**
9	Be With You	*Ricky Martin*	**TONE BWITHYOU**
10	Four Weddings And A Funeral Theme		**TONE FOURWED**

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Humbling and humiliating

I THOUGHT it was going to be a humbling experience.

It was humiliating.

Before going on this assignment, I had surfed the Net for a crash course on basic waitressing. Most of the stuff I found involved gripes on leg cramps, customers not even knowing the difference between regular and decaffeinated coffee, their revenge on bitchy customers (like episodes straight out of "When Chefs Attack"), the low pay and insulting tips. I had an entirely different experience.

I was ready for the complaints, aching legs, bitchy customers, chaos. I was ready for everything—except to be leered at. I was not ready for requests that were not part of the job description of being a waitress. I don't know if it was just me, if I did not fully understand what it meant to be a waitress. But I'm definitely sure that no job should involve having your dignity trampled on. I am not a guest relations officer. I knew that one of my responsibilities was to ensure that the guests' visits were as pleasant as possible. The customer is always right, but only in so far as the food and service are concerned.

I am neither presumptuous nor paranoid, but as we trudged out of the boardroom after the fabulous flambé dessert, I had obviously caught the attention of three middle-aged men by the bar. I immediately cursed the top I was wearing. It wasn't revealing and it was no reason for me to get the treatment that I was about to experience. I had come in the required black shoes and black pants and white collared, long-sleeved shirt. I had no problem with the first two, but the last, my one and only white top that had a collar, also happened to have puffy Snow Whitey-sleeves and giant cuffs that most probably caught their eye.

Chef Greg, who was talking to them, called me over and introduced me as their server for the night. I immediately didn't like the expressions on their faces and the unusually prolonged handshakes set off the warning signals at the back of my head.

As the night wore on, it progressively got worse. My fears were confirmed. It was agony—the longest two hours of my life.

Lecherous old man # 1 was a lawyer who seemed like he was the most decent man of the pack. He even told me to dismiss them as a bunch of lecherous old men I could write about to add spice to my article (Thank you for the idea.)

I thought he was okay, until he looked straight at me and asked, "Have you ever been propositioned?" I could not believe my ears. I pretended to play dumb. Thankfully, the issue was dropped. LOM#1 was the first to leave and as he did so, he warned us not to take the other LOMs seriously.

LOM #2 was also a lawyer. He was the most quiet of the group, but made up for his silence by repeatedly handing over his cell phone to me, where he had inscribed bothersome compliments for me; he complained that I was *mataray*. Then he asked for my number. I said no. Despite my firm answer, he and LOM # 3 continued to bug me for my number or where they could see me again.

LOM #3 was the worst of the bunch. And to think he was a professor from a prestigious university. He asked how old I was, asked about school, my family—what seemed to be harmless stuff at first. But when I handed him a beer, he kept urging me to come closer to them, telling me that they wouldn't bite. He whipped out his cell phone and asked for my number. When I refused, he acted as if it was my loss.

Then they asked if they could buy me a drink. When I said I don't drink, LOM # 3 said, "You must be a boring date." (Ugh, as if I'd go out on a date with him). He turned to LOM # 2 and talked about me as if I wasn't even there.

Cher was freaking out. Every time I came back to the kitchen she'd grab me and if she could have chained me to the oven, she would have. The kitchen had become our sanctuary. But I was not to be spared, even as the regular waiter handed their bill, they still asked for me.

It was at this point that I realized that being a waitress did not only require physical but emotional stamina as well, contradicting the impression that waitressing is a mindless task.

I was told that the three are "regular customers and are really like that." That I should just ignore them. The chef told me that being a waitress really isn't an easy job. He went on to share, "I've had worse discrimination in Les Roche in Switzerland and at the Cordon Bleu in London." Yeah, I thought, but I didn't think I'd have to put up with it in my own country. Just because it happens in the most chi-chi of places doesn't make it acceptable.

C2 is a well-appointed decent establishment. One would not expect that the baser denizens of society would infiltrate such a place. I did not anticipate such behavior from three middle-aged "professionals" dining at a respectable place. I was just a girl trying to be a waitress, nothing more, nothing less.

Happy David

New respect

WAITRESSING is one of the hardest jobs in the world. Just a few weeks ago, we were discussing "Waitresses" by Ranice Henderson Crosby in my poetry class. The next thing I knew, I was living out the job. What a coincidence.

"I think they give us uniforms/ so we remember who we are/ that's what I think..."

We all had to wear white long-sleeved shirts and black pants at C2. I had absolutely no problem with that. It was a fine-dining restaurant-bar with a cozy atmosphere and even the prescribed attire generated respect. We no longer became Pam, Happy, Jules, Maui, Cher and Jason, but C2 waitresses and waiter for the night.

There were many basic protocols to remember: repeating the orders, taking the yellow order slips to the cashiers (and the rest to the kitchen), making sure not to forget who ordered what, etc. I got Table 5, which sat two lovely ladies, phew. When I went to take their orders, however, I felt like a retard because for some reason, I couldn't hear and had to keep asking them to repeat their orders—which on any ordinary day would have earned me a spew of customer complaints. When their drinks were ready, my assigned waiter asked me if I could carry the tray. I bit my lip but nodded. I was actually almost convinced I couldn't do it, but I wanted to try. He told me to place my right palm under the tray and have my left hand assist it on the side. I felt like I was walking on a tightrope and did not let my eyes leave the tray—I didn't care if I looked like a hunchbacked phobic; I had no intentions of breaking any glasses that night! When I got to the table, I felt as though my lungs were going to explode in relief. But much to my horror, I remembered that waitresses were not allowed to set the tray down on the customers' tables. I mustered a weak smile as I tried to find the tray's balance on my right palm. Very slowly, I managed to set each of drinks down on their respective places—successfully. I was so proud of myself. *"Our faces are/one gigantic grin/I don't think they even notice/when we show our teeth/ and raise our hackles/ we're always smiling/ and nodding/ and pleasing..."*

I had to keep smiling every time I attended to a customer. Luckily, I was in a good mood and had really pleasant and patient customers. I didn't even want to think about what would happen if I had been in a bad mood and some equally hot-tempered customer came in.

The worst thing that happened that night though was having to swallow every form of grossness I felt while watching a trio of dirty old men hit on Happy. Every time she went to the bar to tab their order, I kept pulling her hand and telling her that we should just go. But she reminded me that we were waitresses that night; they were her customers. Despite how she felt, Happy had to keep smiling, nodding and being pleasant, attending to their orders. I've seen these scenes in movies, but having it unfold in actuality made me sick to my stomach. It was disgusting. And the worst thing is that it happens everywhere. It's the price of being pretty, and being a girl.

"As for me/ my uniform feels like skin."

This was definitely an experience. I remembered when I confused an order and didn't know how to set the table—which forks or knives went where—one of my customers jokingly said, "Let me speak to your manager." I could only reciprocate a silly grin. It was a joke, thank God, but I imagined how that one line could destroy someone's job. Waitresses have to act like they are immuned to every trace of pain all the time.

I never realized how difficult it was to be a waitress until that night. Waitresses are at everyone's beck and call, with eternal smiles plastered on their faces. I now define waitresses and waiters as social workers, with a fountain of heroism far beyond the mud they trod on.

And I vow never to lose my temper at them again. ***Cheryl Tiu***

E-mail the author at chloe_dominique @yahoo.com

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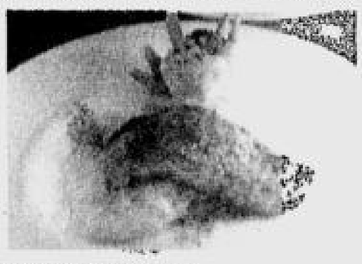
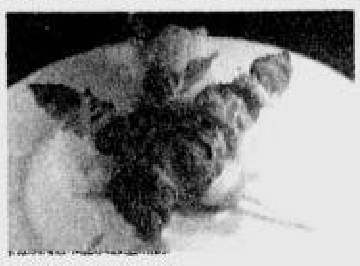

LAPU Amandine

CLASSIC Hoisin Chicken


LAMB Kebabs

FILLET Mignon with Truffle Sauce

'Can I take your order, sir?'

From page C1

stepped in whenever I botched up. He also taught me how to go to the kitchen to give the orders, where to get the condiments and what the things scrawled on the kitchen whiteboard mean. They helped me carry the food to the tables and told me how to distribute the goodies. The two were essential to the success (hey, I didn't spill anything) of my sad attempt at waitressing.

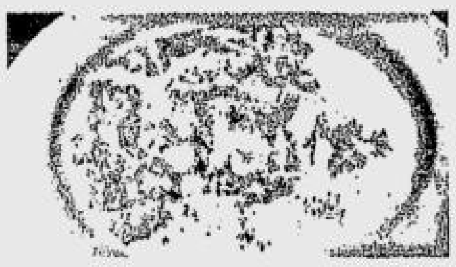
Real waiters don't get to serve people they know (not all the time anyway). Surprise, surprise, I knew some of the people in the table that was assigned to me. There were Red and Patti, two journalists I was with during a hair-raising experience in Tagaytay, and Missy, my shopping buddy in India. I am grateful that they acted normally (after we all shrieked our greetings, that is) and I was able to continue my little charade. They asked about the items on the menu, ordered a lot and talked while they waited for me to bring their food. I kept a straight face the whole time, er, I think.

Real waiters don't get to stand around to chitchat. During slow moments, I hanged around the bar with Jason and Jules and discussed plans for Jules' 2003 wedding.

Real waiters don't get to swoon over that cute chef hiding in the kitchen. (Well, maybe they do.)

Real waiters aren't picked up by their moms after. ***Pam Pastor***

E-mail the author at ppastor@ inquirer.com.ph


GRATINATED Eggplant, Cheese and Tomato Couscous

FLAMBÉ

CRASH course

COYOTES Jules and Jason

PAM on waitress mode

THE C2 crew with the 2bU! gang

Bartender for a night

KERMIT the frog says it's not easy being green. Mark Renton thinks it is not easy being a junkie. Superman (or is it Five for Fighting?) feels it's not easy being himself. I say it's not easy being a bartender. My basis for that statement is more observation than experience. It was a weekend night when we gate-crashed the kitchen and bar areas of C2. Meaning, most of the customers there were diners than drinkers. Since there were already three of us assigned to the bar (the regular waiter, Jules and I) my duty was limited to an attempt to look cute and make goo-goo eyes with hotties. Although yes, I did get to do some work done, like brew coffee, take orders and open some beer bottles (whew!). I felt that I didn't really come to understand the hard work that bartenders go through.

According to Rey Espino, assistant manager of C2, bartenders have a difficult job. Aside from having to remember the names of drinks and their composition, it is their job to entertain customers by juggling and flipping beer bottles. They also get to be pseudo psychiatrists by listening to regular drunkards who have regular and not-so-regular problems. Also, they're probably the last ones to get home since bars are open till the wee hours of the morning and they have to wait out every single customer who doesn't want to stop gulping down alcohol.

But while I chilled some beers and felt the strain on my legs for having stood for quite some time, I realized that it's not a bad job after all. If you're people-oriented and one tough guy who can easily control alcoholics, then you may find bartending a breeze.

Jason Doplito

What will you do right after graduation?

CONGRATULATIONS, graduates! 2bU! wants to make your graduation even more special by giving away dinners for six at C2 restaurant. Ten lucky winners will be chosen. Ten runners-up will receive certificates for day courses on baking and cooking at the Center for Culinary Arts.

Send us a list of three things that you will do right after you graduate along with your name, age, school, course and contact information.

Don't forget to send us your graduation pic, too.

Entries may be sent to the PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER, Chino Roces Avenue corner Yague and Mascardo Streets, Makati City. Or e-mail them to contest2bu@inquirer.com.ph

Deadline for submission is on March 18, 12 noon.

C2 is located at the AIM Conference Center, corner Benavidez and Trasierra Streets, Legaspi Village, Makati City.

SPECIAL THANKS TO JINGJING ROMERO AND THE CRAVINGS GROUP OF COMPANIES

LOCATION C2 RESTAURANT AND BAR

Bar girl for a night

REMEMBER "Coyote Ugly"?

Remember that movie about this bar in NY that had really hot female bartenders who could dance up a storm as well as they could whip out vodka tonics and tequilas in a jiffy? Didn't the bartenders look so hot and together? I mean they made bartending such a glamorous job! For a brief moment, I envisioned myself wearing hot low riders and skimpy tank tops and mixing drinks for a crowd that could only be described as delicious eye candy. It was so easy to picture myself expertly pouring swigs of Jack Daniel's while being adored by a motley crowd in my really hot outfit. If others wanted to become supermodels, I had always fantasized about becoming a bartender.

That was why when Ray, C2's manager, asked us to choose our assignments for the night, I quickly grabbed the chance of becoming a bartender, even for just a couple of hours. I mean, how any harder could it be, right? And besides, this might be the chance to live out my "Coyote Ugly" fantasy.

Well, Jason and I had our pseudo "Coyote Ugly" experience recently. We played bartenders for one night (okay, so to be precise, two hours) in C2. But before you jump into conclusions and think that I was able to live out my fantasy—think again.

Nope, we didn't get to dance on top of the bar. Not that we were unwilling to do so. We just didn't want to assault the sensibilities of the customers in C2. Besides, Jason would have surely pulled me down if I had attempted to go up the ledge of the bar.

Nope, we didn't juggle drinks or wear really hot and sexy costumes. Are you kidding? Gilbert, C2's very able bartender, would have quickly dropped his very calm and friendly demeanor and easily kicked us out of the bar area if we so much as hold more than two bottles of beer up in the air! And forget the sexy costumes! As if! It would have been unlawful (not to mention, shameless and embarrassing) if I had worn something that would show my wide girth!

Nope, we didn't meet any one who looked good enough to be described as eye candy (like Adam Garcia in the movie). Please take note though that Pam does not share the same opinion. Go e-mail her and ask her why she got shy when we were about to introduce this chef guy.

Nope, we didn't get any tips nor were we able to partake of any of the alcoholic drinks that were displayed in the bar. Not for lack of wanting though, I must say.

Just about the only thing that looked remotely "coyote-ish" were a bunch of intoxicated, "mature" customers who had no qualms in engaging Maui and Happy in cringe-inducing conversations.

Nonetheless, it was still very much a rewarding experience. To begin with, the experience demystified the image of the bartender as a glamorous character. Being a bartender is not at all that glamorous. In fact, whoever thought bartending is an easy job is a fool and half.

You have to stand for hours on hours and be at the beck and call of your customers. Unlike waiters who can call out for last orders, bartenders can't close shop till the last customer leaves. It is not exactly fun dealing with drunken louts or demanding customers. In fact, I nearly froze when one of the customers in C2, who as it was, already had one too many drinks, returned a bottle of beer because "'*di siya malamig*." Good thing Gilbert was there to handle the situation smoothly. "*Meron talagang mga customers na ganyan. Wala kang magagawa kundi pagbigyan*," he said, with a shrug. Look at it this way—any intoxicated person is not in his usual state of mind—he can easily create a ruckus or, in extreme circumstances, be violent if he doesn't get his way. It takes a lot of diplomacy and aplomb to be able to manage a drunken costumer.

Nor is it a breeze dealing with and playing guidance counselor to many an inebriated and problematic client. Not only are you supposed to dispense sensible advise, you also have to keep an eye on every one else's order. And on a full night, not only is it difficult to remember the orders of each and every person in the room, you have to make sure no one is getting free drinks or else you are answerable to your bosses.

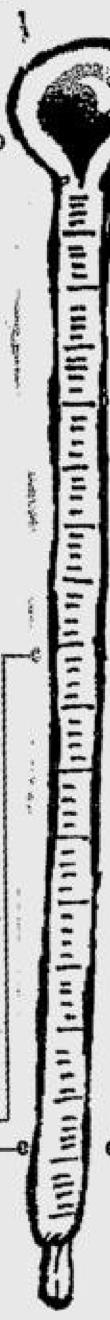
And when you think about it, working till the wee hours of the morning can put a damper on your personal life.

So do I still want to become a bartender? Maybe in the future if I have enough money and decide to put up a bar and when I've lost enough weight and can fit into one of those slinky little outfits. For now, I'm happy enough being able to mix my own vodka tonic, thanks to C2's trusty bartender, Gilbert.

Jules Alcantara

2bU! THERMOMETER

Girl power vs cell phone thieves, new 'Survivor,' Britney's 'Crossroad,' crummy Net provider, abusive cinema ushers



"Survivor: Marquesas." Good thing fans didn't have to wait too long for the next installment of this reality-based TV series. And they have better-looking contestants this time around. Kudos to Studio 23 for deciding to carry the program, although it would be nice if they'd have more rebroadcasts of the episodes.

Grammy winners. U2 and Alicia Keys are the biggest winners this year. U2 got four awards including Best Rock Performance and Record of the Year. Keys meanwhile earned five Grammys, including Best Female in the R&B category.

Anti-piracy concert. Finally, musicians will be heard! Head to the Music Museum and Intramuros this Saturday, March 9, to support your favorite acts! Tickets go for P100-P130. And with a lineup like Wolfgang, Barbie's Cradle, Greyhoundz, and Itchyworms! (among others, playing at the Music Museum), how can you go wrong?

"V-Day" at the Folk Arts Theater. How many times must we elaborate why women rock? A stellar performance by Belinda Panelo, with her shocking revelations on life with, um, a vagina.

Is that you, Christina? Ok, what's wrong with you? When you look like RuPaul, Mariah Carey, Marilyn Monroe and Madonna all gone wrong, there must be something bothering you.

MTV's "Becoming." Become your favorite star for a day and have it immortalized in a music video that features the original set, makeup artists and major star treatment all in one. Cheesy? Well, it's definitely funny.

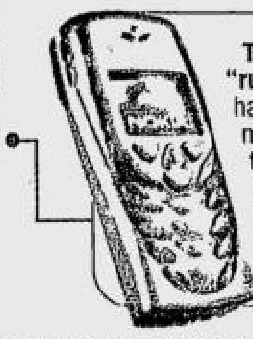
Power-tripping officials. It's one to have security guards on a power trip, but it's another when cinema usherettes don't let you in because you don't have a college ID with your birthdate on it, even though the ID says you're a sophomore (and to top it off, when they say they only let third-year college students in because they're sure those students are above 18). Please, do the math. 1983 is equal to 19 years old.

Philworld. This prepaid Internet card provider better shape up. Logging on is a constant problem—either the line's always busy or your password doesn't work even if it's valid—and when you finally get in, disconnection is almost always a possibility. The people behind this company should keep in mind that users—a lot of them students—don't just go online to chat or search for naked pictures of Britney. These cards are used for research and for e-mail. If they don't work and aren't reliable, the whole purpose of their prepaid cards is defeated.

"Temptation Island 2." More shocking secrets! More revealing clothes! More annoying cast members! It's a trip back to the island you wish you were on. The show is coming to your tubes in the middle of March!

Girl power. Leidy Loreto, a third-year journalism student at UST, was riding a jeep on her way home when the man beside her held a knife against her stomach and commanded her to hand her cell phone over. She didn't. She grabbed the blade and struggled with the man, kicking him and screaming at the other passengers for help. They didn't move a muscle but that didn't matter—Leidy handled him well. Leidy's hands were wounded, but the man is now in jail.

Britney's "Crossroads." We just can't wait for Britney's debut movie! We're going to wear pink at the premiere, and half of us will squeal and the other half will laugh at Britney's attempt to act. Maybe a small percentage will cry because she has Justin and we don't.



The Nokia 8310—can you say "runt"? This phone seems to have the most problems in the market, from hanging problems to...well, a *lot* of hanging problems. We don't care if there's a radio or a Snowboarding game—give us the quality we deserve!

New MYX VJ's Michi Valeranio, Jon Salkin and Nate. Welcome to the music video scene! We hope to see more improvement in music programs, and who knows, you guys just might bring that spark we're looking for!

TOY WORLD
toy Sale
March 1-31
Save up to P400
on bikes • trikes • ride-ons
Pajero Off Road
Winnie The Pooh Double Seater
Winnie The Pooh Toy Car
Now 699.75
Barbie Trike
Pooh with Basket Push Handle
Now 999.75
Powerpuff Blossom
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We've got it all for you!
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Get a chance to
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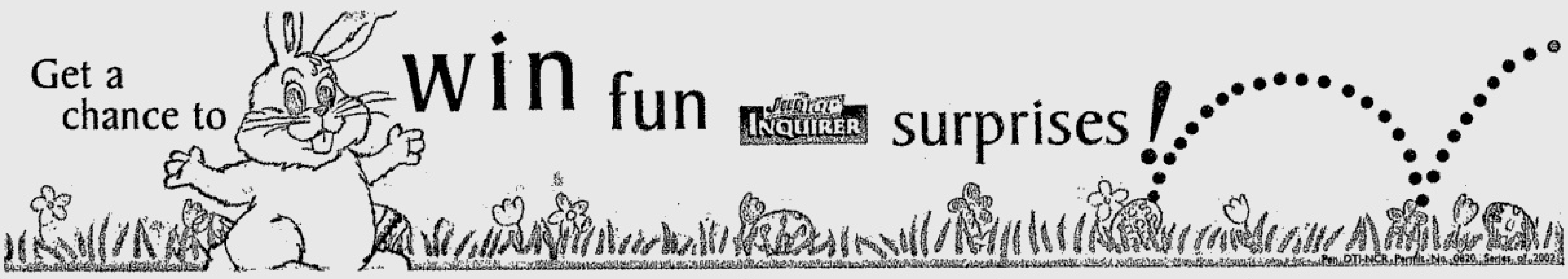
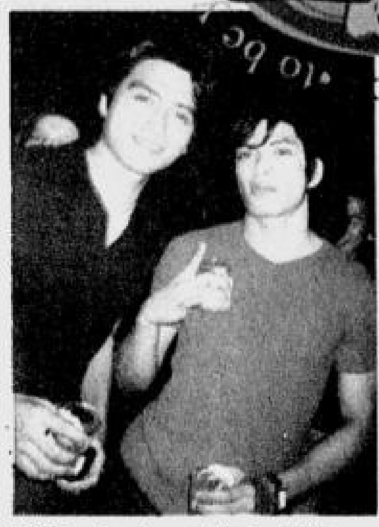
INJUSA GO-KART JR
(with Casco Moto-Cross Helmet)
Every P300 purchase entitles you to a raffle coupon
Draw Date: April 12, 2002 3pm
Ad & Promo Dept., SM Inc. # 400 C. Palanca St., Quiapo Manila
Deadline for submission of entries:
Closing store hour of March 31, 2002
Per DTI-NCR Permit No 0638, Series of 2002
QUIAPO • MAKATI • CUBAO • HARRISON • NORTH EDSA • STA. MESA • ORTIGAS • LAS PINAS • BACOOR • FAIRVIEW • MANILA • PAMPANGA • ILOILO • CEBU • DAVAO


Get a chance to win fun Junior Inquirer surprises!
Per DTI-NCR Permit No. 0620, Series of 2002


TV'S prized new finds, Alfie Vargas and Robby Mananquil

BEAUTY AND THE BEST. Tanya Paulsen and Epi Quizon

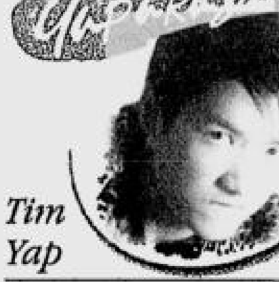
BUDDHA bless you with one wish... Mia Borromeo and Jacques Dupasquier

MOULIN ROUGE. Pilar Estrada and Audrey Tan

COFFEE to cocktails together with Celine Lopez and Victor Consunji

RADIO ROMANCE. Atom Henares and Karen Jones

Buddha-*liciously* hot!


Tim Yap

I REMEMBER when I was 7 years old. It was my birthday, so naturally my doting mother prepared a big kiddie bash for me. It was held in our house with the usual "spaghetti-barbecue-chicken-*ube*-cake-and-ice-cream" treats that are part and parcel of any children's party. I arrived in time for the blowing of the cake, as my mom started to lead everyone into the "*boitday*" song (they were gonna sing the *boitday* song without me!). I was probably the only kid late for his own celebration.

I didn't know what to wear. I spent hours rummaging through my closet. Forty-eight years after, I came out of my room wearing red from head to toe (my lucky color), in my dad's Lanvin shirt paired with *modista* pants and newly bought Otto shoes, plus red socks. I was probably the youngest fashion victim at that time.

Fast forward Sunday night. Buddha Bar (and its owner, young glitz biz royalty **Jacob Fernandez**) cohosted a postnatal fete for yours truly to coincide with their opening. Upstairs, at the former Fashion Café space, the giant Buddha figures welcomed the guests, glam partyphiles of all shapes, sexes and sizes. Models, DJs and VJs hobnobbed with young captains of diverse industries, all in a state of intimate intoxication. (Chivas, Absolut, Q, Slammo, etc... Hik!)

Downstairs, it was a sea of red-clad revelers who were watching the Chinese opera and orchestra that was set up in the Glorietta 2 (Tokyo, Tokyo, Venezia and Luk Yuen areas) street. I arrived as the show was midway—I was late again for my own birthday party—déjà vu! Immediately, a stream of happy birthday greetings surrounded my view. It was packed, but enough to be able to move around and breathe.

Post-birthday bash

This time, **Rajo Laurel** made a red, red, red ensemble, with oversized rouged ruffles on my neck and a hand-painted red-and-white jacket paired with tuxedo pants. I gave Rajo my favorite Chinois words (words such as dragon, God, the number 7, among others) and he hand-painted these words on the jacket as I was fitting!

Mr. H—**Henri Calayag**—spruced my hair once again into Astro Boy proportions. I felt like auditioning for the circus after seeing the finished product of a red avant-garde, mod harlequin-looking Rajo outfit—I loved it. Some things never change.

I also remember the late feng-shui guru **Paul Lau** as he advised me to throw my natal day bashes after Chinese New Year—it's luckier that way. The bigger, the better (this is Paul Lau, remember?). Celebrating one's birthday before the actual date diminishes the good fortune that will come our way, he said. Since then, I would mark my yearly celebrations weeks, even months after my real birthday.

Friends ask me, why on a Sunday? Well, I told them, it's family day. Friends are like family to me. I also wanted to disprove old fallacies about the Manila party scene. When I started to throw theme parties, people said, "Manila won't dress up for these events." Today, every other party organizer throws themes to their events. Great! Next, they said nobody would go out on early weekdays, or on Sundays. Last Sunday, Buddha Bar was packed, with half the street filled with partyphiles all in "Buddha-licious" (coined by **Miguel Rosales**) red.

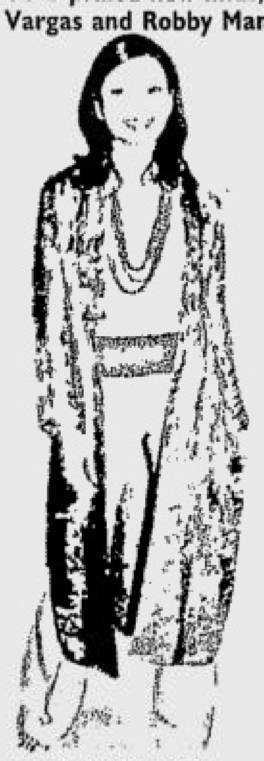
Family time

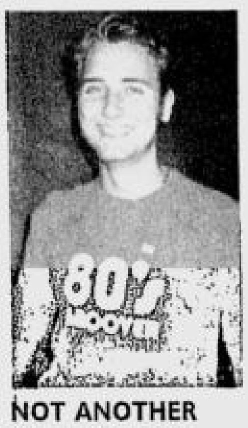
I left at half past three (a.m.!) and there were still a lot of guests chilling along the street and in the bar. Alas! There are still a lot of myths in the scene that can be demolished—which makes life here as a mover all the more exciting. Nothing is impossible, even in Manila.

Midnight, the streets took a life of their own as the Mystical Merchants—a percussion musical duo—jammed alongside Buddha Bar resident DJ **Bryan Yabao**. Partyphiles were dancing on the streets without the usual barrage of cars and outsiders common during parties within the week. I distributed laser sound guns (I wanted to simulate a children's party) at the party's peak as guests chased each other (I think it turned into a swingers party), for reasons only they knew. Wink, wink.

Naughtiness aside (and I must tell you, there was a lot of it that night), I looked at my friends and loved ones present, and I understood what Paul Lau said. It isn't the size, the celebrity profile or the grandiosity of the party that makes the celebrant happy. It's time with friends—whether it means making time for each other or just spending time together—that spells the difference.

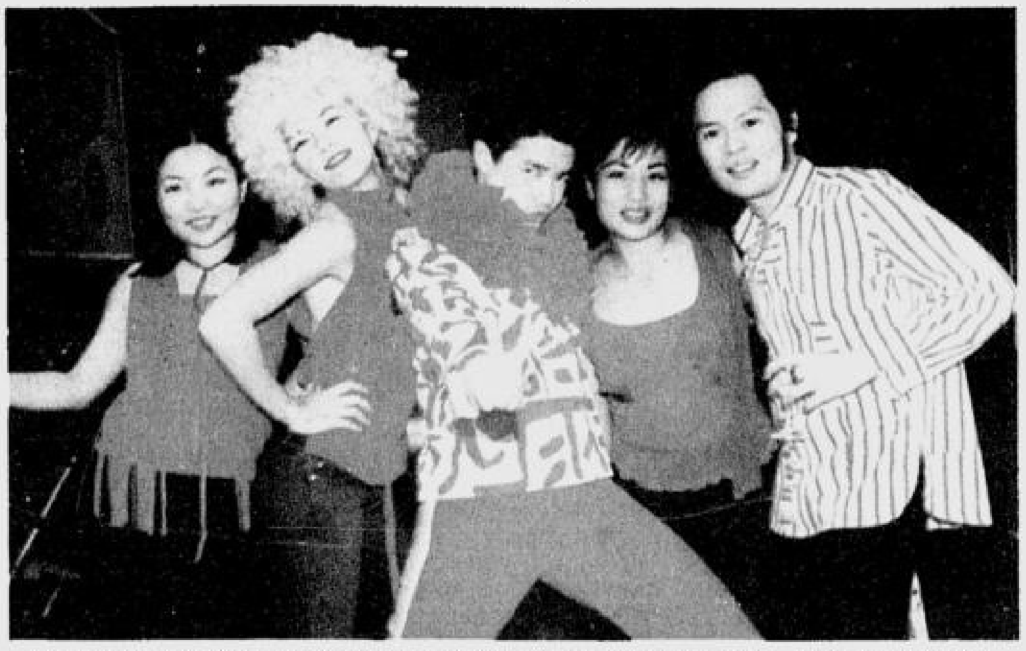
Suddenly, a party held on a Sunday gave a whole new twist to what a family is all about.

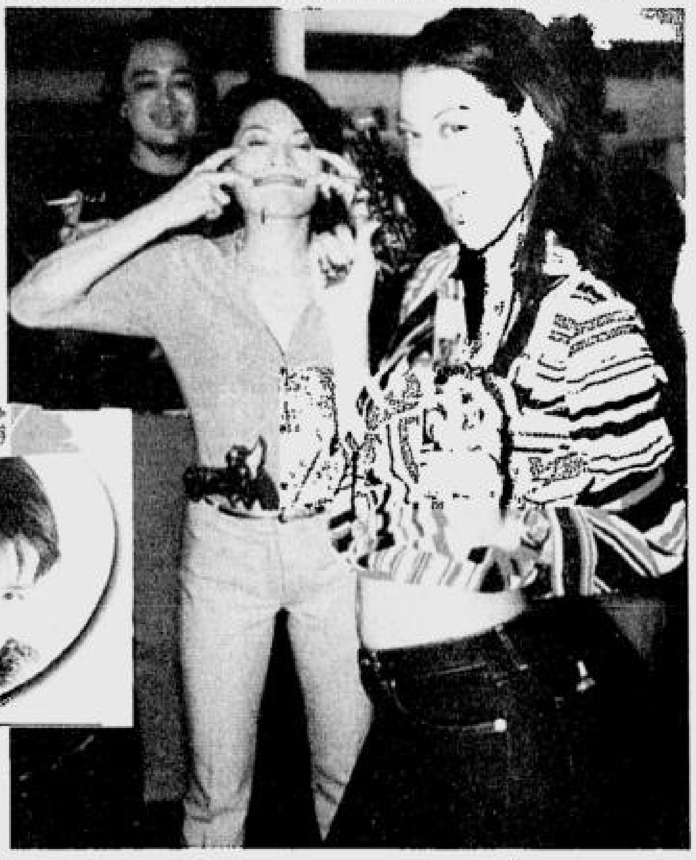

BENETTON BABE. My better half Rissa Samson exudes Buddha-licious grace.

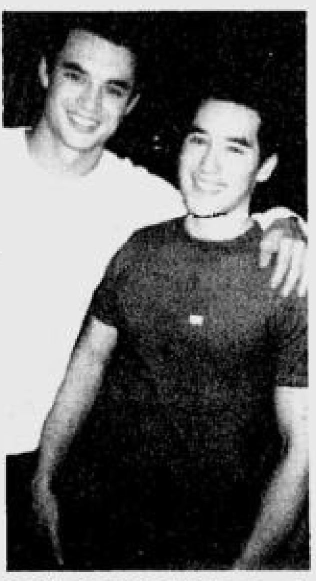

NOT ANOTHER TEEN MOVIE. Marcus Bernestrom at the dance floor

ATTAGIRL! Andrea del Rosario sizzles.

RED, white and blue for Freida Dario


RED LIGHT DISTRICT. A fringed Joey Carpo, a blonde Leica Carpo, a ruffled Tim Yap, a shawled Malou Gamboa and a striped Patrick Reyno

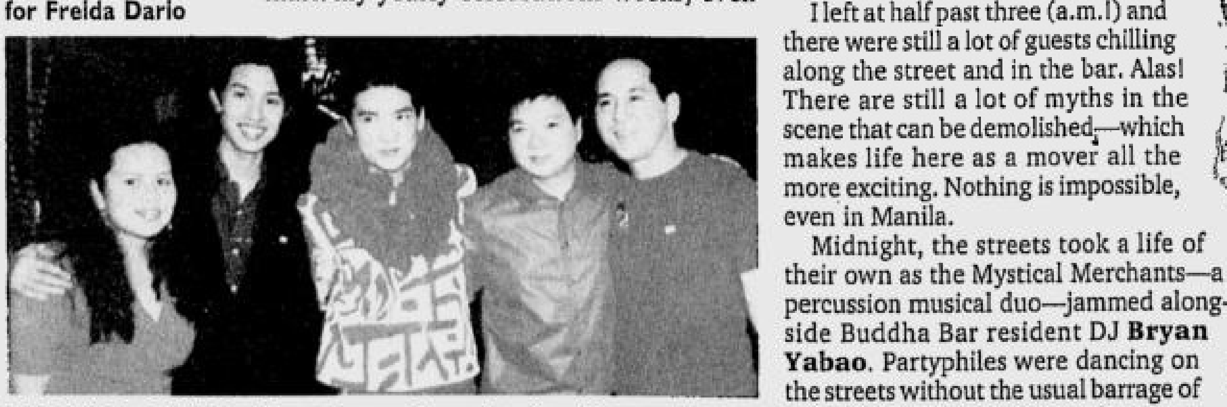

RED RIDING HOOD NOW. Alcs Porras, Mylene Dizon and Joey Mead clowning around


DOUBLE TROUBLE. Brad Turvey and Mickey Randall

CHINESE opera sprucing the street scene

BLOOMING. Anna Palabyab at Buddha Bar

PHOTOS BY TIM YAP AND WILLY SAW

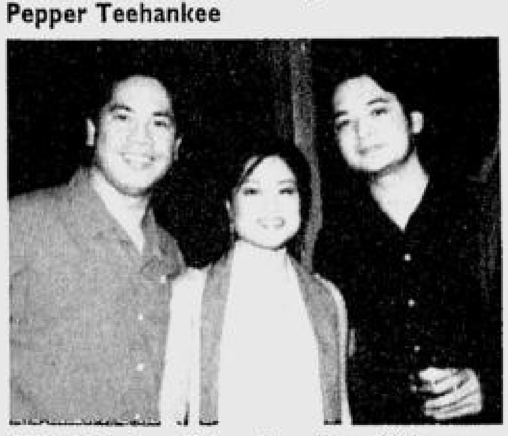

RED TIDE. 2bU! chief Pam Pastor, Jason Doplito, Yaparazzi, Buddha Bar owner Jacob Fernandez and Atom Henares

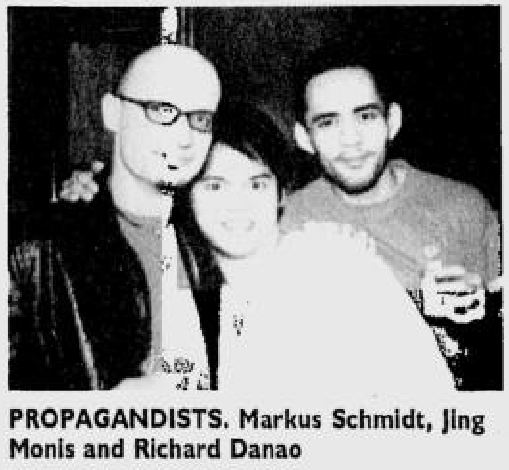
FUN AND FEARLESS. Paolo Carvajal, Myrza Sison and Mae Young

MUST-HAVE for every girl—friends like Pierra Calasanz, Minelli Bautista and Mike Huang

BANG,BANG! Angela Gray, Hans Sebastian and Tats Locsin

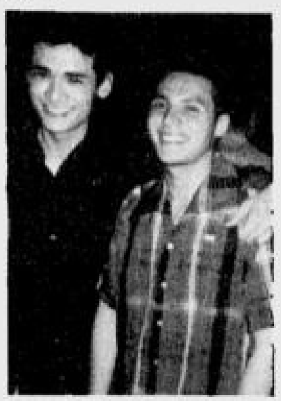
NOCTURNAL style files Louie Ysmael, Philip Cu-Unjieng, Jenni Epperson and Pepper Teehankee


RED SEA. Boo Kyler, Angelique Villaraza and Joel Ong

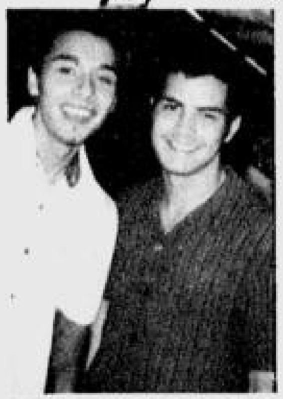

PROPAGANDISTS. Markus Schmidt, Jing Monis and Richard Danao

RED LANE. Kara Tolentino and Miguel Rosales

BUDDHA BABES. Chi Canillas and Romina Urra


CRIMSON CUTIES. Albert Adrales and Ryan Robles

BOOTYLICIOUS sisters Juliet and Mimi Tan


MYX MATCH. Paul Hammond and Ed Feist

RED ROCK LOBSTER. Dina Devries and Karl Roy

BLUSH STROKES. Phoemela Baranda and Aina Calizo

NEW models on the block, Rich and Thomas

Not quite *'Bridget Jones,'* but will do

By Pam Pastor

REVIEWS

YOU'VE read both books (maybe even "Bridget Jones' Guide to Life") at least nine times, bought the (original, let me stress) VCD and have almost memorized the dialogue, and compared yourself to her even if you're ages away from hitting the big three—oh, heck, you're even beginning to sound like her.

There's no doubt about it. Bridget—the icon of sorts—has got you hooked. But now, where's Bridget?

The absence [illegible] the next chapter [illegible]er life is leaving a big void in your own existence.

You are looking for her, even enduring withdrawal symptoms. Someone should really strap that Helen Fielding woman to bed and force her to write the next book in the manner of Annie Wilkes and Paul Sheldon in Stephen King's "Misery."

But while we wait for that to happen, here are three reasons to break out of that bad spell:

Three books featuring protagonists that are women after Bridget's own heart. No, they're not twins of Bridget, but it's easy to get attached to them as you have latched on to our ex-singleton hero. They may not keep diaries, but Jemima, Nadine and Rebecca are just as funny and as screwed up as our beloved Bridget.

thirty nothing
By the author of Ralph's Party
A NOVEL
Lisa Jewell

> Missing Bridget? Don't fret, Jones clones are hanging out in the shelves of bookshops

Old flame

Title: "Thirty Nothing"
Author: Lisa Jewell
Bridget clone: Nadine Kite
Her Mark Darcy: Dig Ryan

The plot: Nadine has shared a perfect friendship with Dig Ryan since they were kids. The only dark part of their relationship was when Delilah Lillie, the school beauty, stepped in and became the love of Dig's life. Fast-forward to their adult life. Delilah's gone. Dig and Nadine are once again best buds. They go through one bad relationship after another—relationships that don't impair their closeness. Their seemingly perfect world comes crashing down when they run into Delilah one day. She basically takes over Dig's life, driving Nadine nuts. A hysterical series of events follows, including Nadine's big mistake—calling her own "Delilah" back into her life, her first love Phil. This book is a gem. You'll love the laugh-out-loud scenarios and the flashbacks that can make anyone feel giddy.

Why she's like Bridget: Nadine has a tendency for unnecessary hysterics, making bad decisions like calling up ex-lovers who seemed hot before but are now washed-up losers, and she does stupid things when drunk (just like everyone else).

Why she's not Bridget: Nadine is already up the career ladder—she's a successful photographer who rakes in major moolah by shooting almost naked women in tropical paradise.

Bridget-sounding quote: "Oh my God, I'm a f----g psycho. Maybe I deserve Phil. Maybe we were made for each other. We could stalk each other and send each other sick letters and videotapes. I'm mad. I'm barking mad. I used to be sane but that part of my life is over now..."

jemima j
a novel about ugly ducklings and swans
Jane Green
INTERNATIONAL BESTSELLER

Weight-loss wonder

Title: "Jemima J"
Author: Jane Green
Bridget clone: Jemima Jones
Her Mark Darcy: Ben Williams or is it Brad, that hunk from California?

The plot: Jemima Jones is brilliant and sensitive but not exactly happy. Her writing skills are being wasted in her stint as a tips writer for a lowly newspaper in her town. She lives with two shallow, social-climbing roommates who treat her like a slave. Aside from pining for her officemate and friend, major hottie Ben Williams, her love life is nonexistent. She is also a hundred pounds overweight. After discovering the Internet, Jemima logs on and reinvents herself as JJ, a sexy, beautiful, fitness-obsessed glam girl. But the online transformation isn't enough. Getting sick of moping around, she decides to take charge of her life and experiences the makeover of a lifetime. Although Green's style can take a bit of getting used to (she likes shifting from first to second to third person—and sometimes even talks to Jemima in the book), the book's fast pace is refreshing and will have you turning one page after another like carzy.

Why she's like Bridget: They share more than their last name. Jemima is obsessed with her weight but likes bingeing. She is longing for a better job—a better life actually.

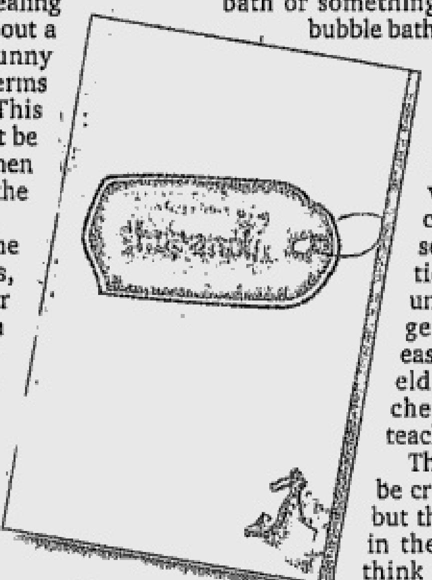
Why she's not: Aside from the fact that Jemima is almost twice Bridget's size in the beginning, she has roommates and successfully trims down later on.

Bridget-sounding quote: (On a box of cookies) "Surely it's better to eat them, make them disappear, so there's no more bad food in the house. Surely it's better to finish them in one go than to eat them slowly and steadily over the course of a week. That way there won't be any left after tonight, and then I can really start my diet. The one that's going to work. The one that's going to fulfill my fantasies. Yeah, I'll eat them now and start again tomorrow."

She shops till she drops

Title: "Confessions of a Shopaholic"
Author: Sophie Kinsella
Bridget clone: Rebecca Bloomwood
Her Mark Darcy: Luke Brandon

The plot: Rebecca lives in one of London's trendier neighborhoods, eats good food, is addicted to good clothes and generally lives a luxurious life. But she can't really afford them—not on her salary as a writer for Successful Savings (irony, irony). When her money problems start closing in on her, she tries two tactics–cut back on expenses or make more money. But her attempts all backfire. This book isn't just about a person dealing with debt problems, it is about a woman—a hysterically funny one at that—coming to terms with her life's realities. This book is a winner. You won't be able to put it down. And when you do, you'd regret that the roller-coaster ride is over.



Why she's like Bridget: The social boo-boos, her flubs, how she puts her foot in her mouth, her reliance on a self-help book (in the beginning anyway), the lame excuses, her money and career problems and fooling people into believing her even when she doesn't know what she's talking about—all scream Bridget.

Why she's not: Becky has normal parents and her TV appearances are more successful than Bridget's.

Bridget-sounding quote (in this case, there are countless): (While lining up for lottery tickets) "What'll I do with £10 million? Well, a huge party to begin with. Somewhere smart but cool, with loads of champagne and dancing and a taxi service so no one has to drive. And going-home presents, like really nice bubble bath or something. (Does Calvin Klein do bubble bath?) Then I'll buy houses for all my family and friends, of course. Suppose I buy 20 houses at £250,000 each. That'll leave me £5 million... Obviously I'll do loads for charity. In fact I'll probably set up a charitable foundation. I'll support all those unfashionable charities that get ignored, like skin diseases and home helps for the elderly. And I'll send a big check to my old English teacher..."

There you go. They may not be creations of Helen Fielding, but they've got enough Bridget in them—actually, when you think about it, all women do, whether they like it or not.

Available at Dymocks in Robinsons Place Manila

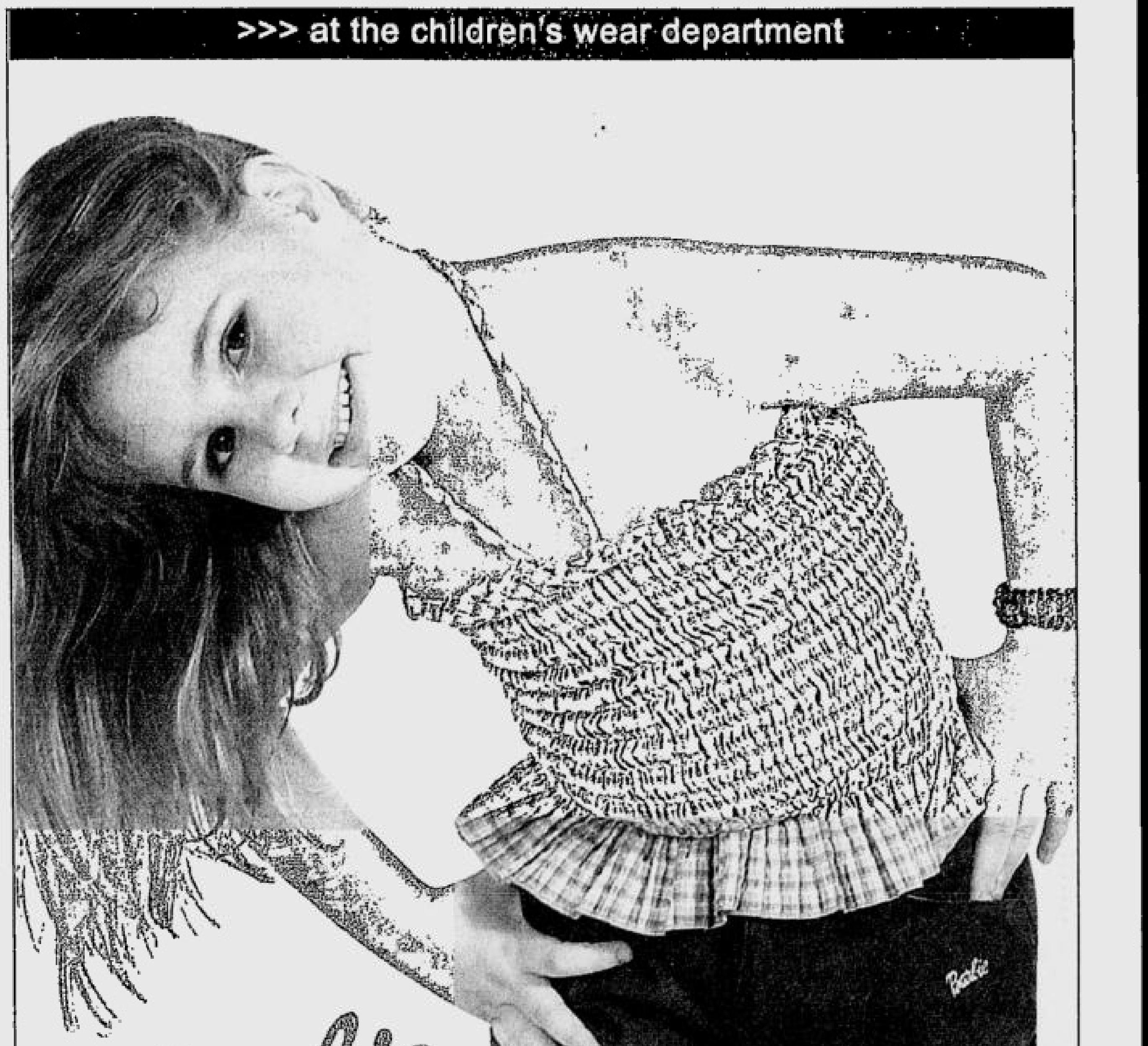
E-mail the author at ppastor@inquirer.com.ph

What do YOU think?

Which is your favorite gimmick place?

a) Libis
b) Makati
c) Manila

Share your thoughts online or via your cell phone
ON THE WEB Answer the questions by logging on to http://you.inq7.net
CELL PHONE Answer the questions by texting in the keywords "YOU POLL 2BU" and send to 2333 for GLOBE users or 211 for SMART


>>> at the children's wear department

Gartered spaghetti top with ruffles over accented denims

We've got it all for you!
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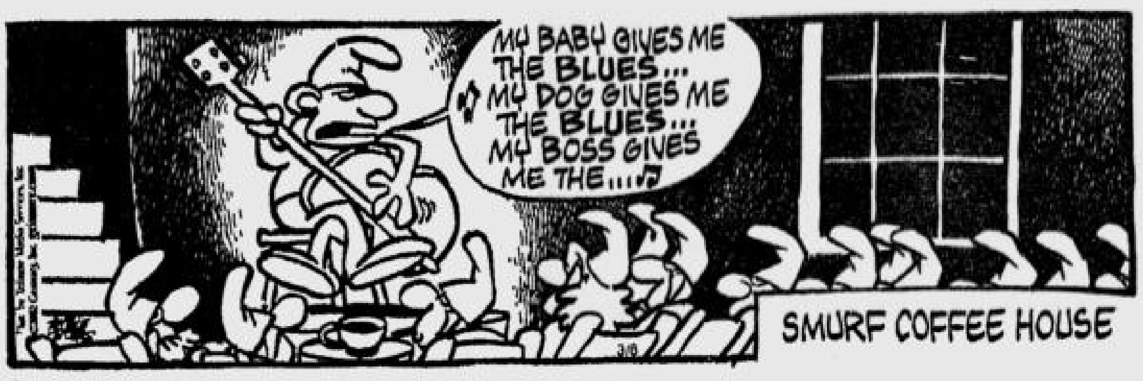
For three Saturdays, beginning March 9
tell your kids to start
looking for Easter eggs in the Junior INQUIRER Easter Egg Hunt!
Cut and collect
at least 9 eggs
to join the raffle!
Per DTI-NCR Permit No. 0820, Series of 2002

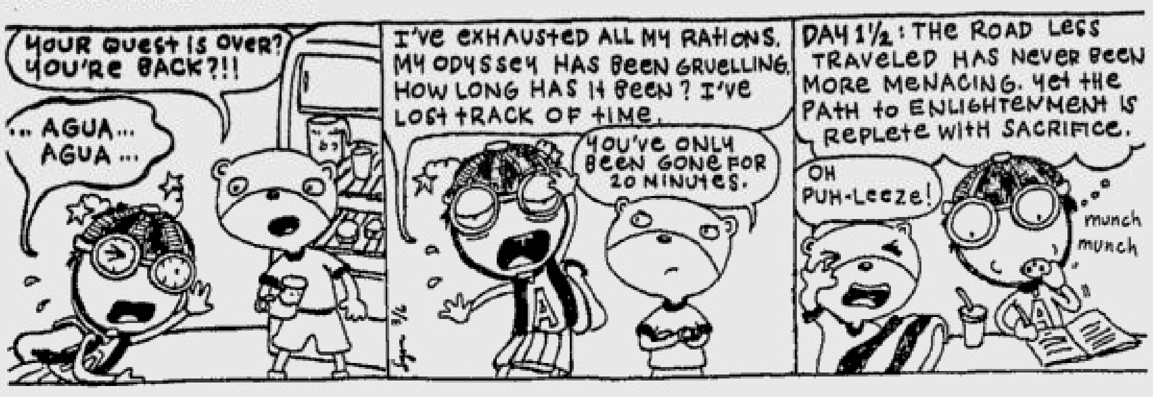
MOTHER GOOSE & GRIMM

BY MIKE PETERS


MY BABY GIVES ME THE BLUES... MY DOG GIVES ME THE BLUES... MY BOSS GIVES ME THE....
SMURF COFFEE HOUSE
3/6

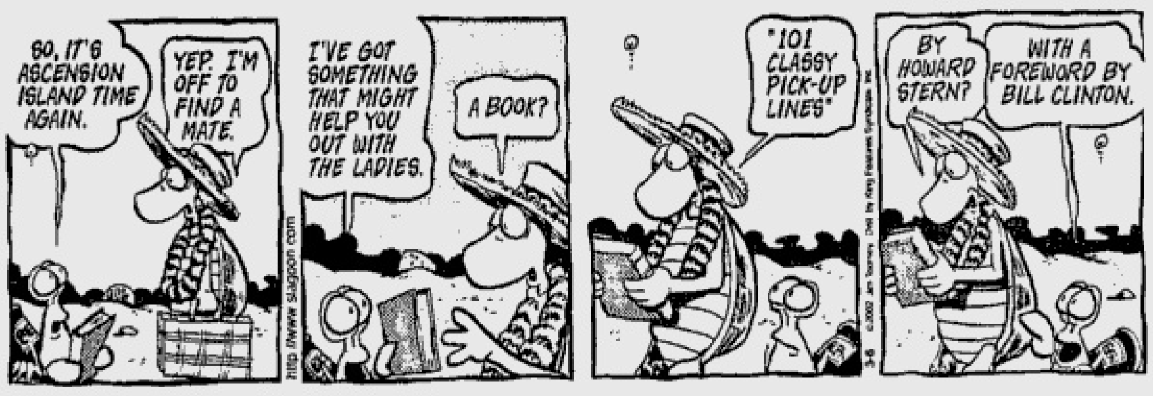
ATOMO AND WEBOY

BY LYRA GARCELLANO


YOUR QUEST IS OVER? YOU'RE BACK?!!
... AGUA... AGUA ...
I'VE EXHAUSTED ALL MY RATIONS. MY ODYSSEY HAS BEEN GRUELLING. HOW LONG HAS IT BEEN? I'VE LOST TRACK OF TIME.
YOU'VE ONLY BEEN GONE FOR 20 MINUTES.
DAY 1½: THE ROAD LESS TRAVELED HAS NEVER BEEN MORE MENACING. YET THE PATH TO ENLIGHTENMENT IS REPLETE WITH SACRIFICE.
OH PUH-LEEZE!
munch munch

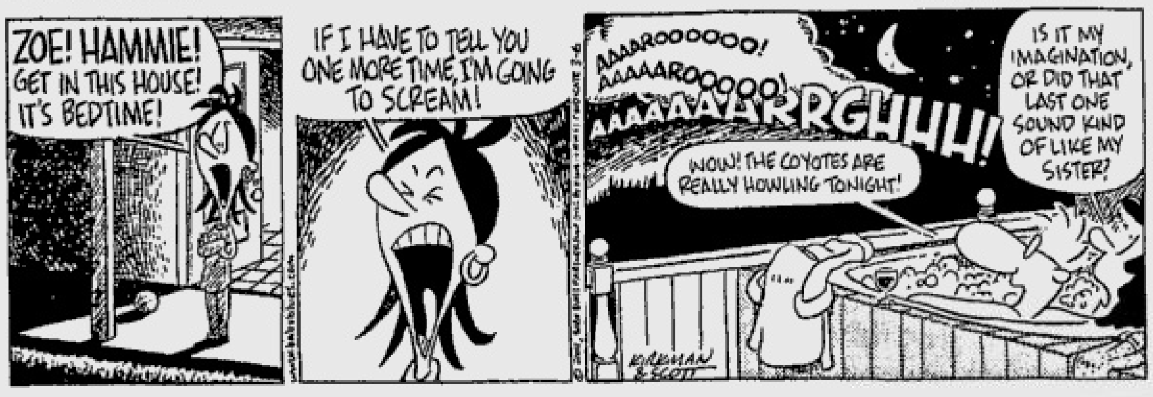
SHERMAN'S LAGOON

BY JIM TOOMEY


SO, IT'S ASCENSION ISLAND TIME AGAIN.
YEP. I'M OFF TO FIND A MATE.
I'VE GOT SOMETHING THAT MIGHT HELP YOU OUT WITH THE LADIES.
A BOOK?
"101 CLASSY PICK-UP LINES"
BY HOWARD STERN?
WITH A FOREWORD BY BILL CLINTON.
http://www.slagoon.com

BABY BLUES

BY JERRY SCOTT


ZOE! HAMMIE! GET IN THIS HOUSE! IT'S BEDTIME!
IF I HAVE TO TELL YOU ONE MORE TIME, I'M GOING TO SCREAM!
AAAAROOOOOOO! AAAAAROOOOO! AAAAAAAARRGHHH!
WOW! THE COYOTES ARE REALLY HOWLING TONIGHT!
IS IT MY IMAGINATION, OR DID THAT LAST ONE SOUND KIND OF LIKE MY SISTER?
KIRKMAN & SCOTT

HOROSCOPE

BY EUGENIA LAST

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: Rob Reiner, Ed McMahon, Tom Arnold, Stedman Graham

Happy Birthday: You'll be concerned with helping those in need this year. Be generous in a practical way and make a difference to those less fortunate. You will be ambitious and authoritative when dealing with professionals. Your numbers are 17, 28, 32, 35, 41, 47

ARIES (March 21-April 19): You will have a greater sense of what it is you want to do and a far more open and receptive attitude. The knowledge you take in today will be worth its weight in gold.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20): Don't be fooled by a lot of hype about an investment. Don't push to make financial changes; instead, prepare to accept the changes that are inevitable.

GEMINI (May 21-June 20): Uncertainties may cause you to question any partnerships that you are involved in. Take it nice and slow and don't jump to conclusions or make rash decisions.

CANCER (June 21-July 22): Focus on what you can do, not on what you can't. Put all your efforts into whatever job you are working on and you will make great strides. Stick to comfort food and pamper yourself

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22): Take the plunge and start to do something you enjoy. Let your creativity flourish. You will have a competitive edge today so don't hold back.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22): Avoid any turmoil going on at home. Get out and do things that you like to do. Take in a show or go shopping for something you've wanted for a long time but don't overspend in the process.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22): Talk is cheap and it will help you get what you want. The more you mingle the better the support you'll get. Positive changes can be made and you'll be surprised at how well things turn out.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21): Work, work and more work. You may not feel like doing all the things on your agenda but if you grit your teeth and dig in you'll have it all done in no time.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21): You can make a new start if you pull yourself together and focus on what's important to you today. Don't let anyone try to talk you out of what you know will be best for you.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19): Uncertainties regarding work may develop if you are evasive about what you are doing. Be upfront and you will stand a much better chance of getting the support required to follow your own ideas.

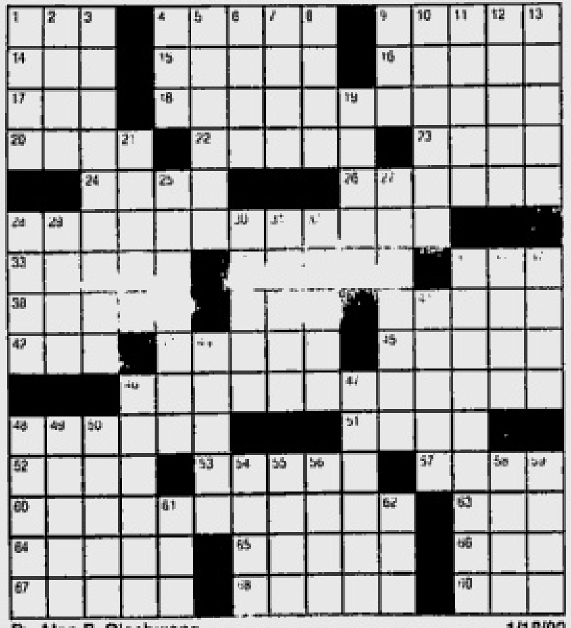
AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18): Sudden changes will be a welcome surprise. Put your ideas into motion and help those who just can't help themselves. You will feel good about yourself and the friendships you develop.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20): You may want to take a bit of a breather. You will have the discipline to take in a vast amount of information today but this isn't the time to try to start new projects or follow new avenues.

Birthday Baby: You are cautious and determined. You set your sights on something and go for it. You use common sense in order to achieve. You are responsible and persistent by nature.

DAILY CROSSWORD

TMSPuzzles@aol.com



By Alan P. Olschwang
Huntington Beach, CA

1/18/02

ACROSS
1 Chinese way
4 Type of toast
9 Curvy letters
14 Eurasian viper
15 Hunter in the sky
16 Lixiviate
17 Start of Charles Kettering quote
18 Part 2 of quote
20 Harmony, briefly
22 Became less tense
23 Secluded valley
24 Lending organs?
26 European peninsula
28 Part 3 of quote
33 Nelson or Campbell
34 Actor Nick
35 Audit expert's letters
38 Knight's mount
39 Opposite of SSW
40 State of rapture
42 Instant greenery
43 Slip away
45 Secular law
46 Part 4 of quote
48 Win back
51 Evaluate
52 Love god
53 Type of tiger or towel
57 Italian noble family
60 Part 5 of quote
63 End of quote
64 Lauder of cosmetics
65 Vigilant
66 End of auction?
67 Maudlin
68 "Demian" author
69 Ruby or Sandra

DOWN
1 Makes lace
2 Pale
3 Indefinite
4 Bovine greeting
5 Composer Bloch
6 Singer McCann
7 Men of the future?
8 Feed the kitty
9 Blighted tree
10 Ranked at Wimbledon
11 "More Than I Can Say" singer
12 Pathogenic bacteria
13 Former Dolphins' head coach
19 Dunce
21 Hiawatha's craft
25 Lyrical poem
27 Northern Italian city
28 Irish luck
29 Choir part
30 Nullify
31 Wine-and-cheese dish
32 Escapee
35 Challenged
36 Milne's Winnie
37 Author Tyler
41 Fritter away
44 "Adoration of the Magi" painter
46 Actress Jodie
47 Boo-boos
48 Sublease a flat
49 Delete
50 Brava
54 Oriental nanny
55 Soccer great
56 Checks out
58 Family plan
59 Rochester's love
61 Mystery-writer Josephine
62 Shoshone

PREVIOUS PUZZLE ANSWER

F	A	R	S	I	■	E	R	A	T	O	■	L	T	D
A	R	D	E	N	■	N	U	B	I	A	■	E	W	E
S	T	A	C	K	E	D	D	E	C	K	■	G	I	N
■	■	■	■	W	I	S	E	D	■	T	S	A	R	S
E	D	G	I	E	R	■	■	■	G	R	I	L	L	E
D	O	U	B	L	E	D	E	A	L	E	R	■	■	■
G	R	A	I	L	■	R	E	V	U	E	■	P	E	G
A	I	R	S	■	M	E	R	I	T	■	Y	E	L	L
R	A	D	■	B	A	S	I	S	■	M	E	D	I	A
■	■	■	■	H	O	U	S	E	O	F	C	A	R	D	S
S	C	R	A	W	L	■	■	■	E	C	H	O	E	S
T	R	O	L	L	■	D	W	E	L	L	■	■	■	■
Y	E	W	■	F	O	U	R	F	L	U	S	H	E	R
L	E	D	■	U	B	O	A	T	■	R	O	O	M	Y
E	L	Y	■	L	I	S	P	S	■	E	L	I	S	E

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1/18/02

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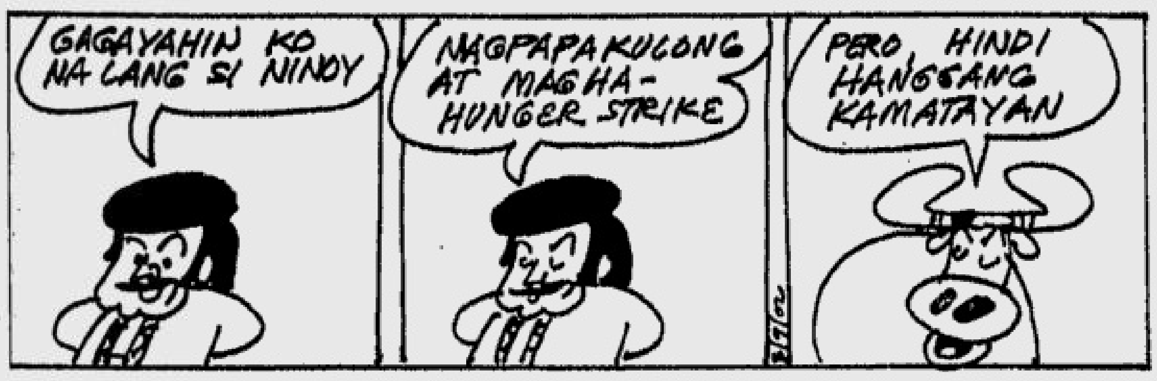
BY JESS ABRERA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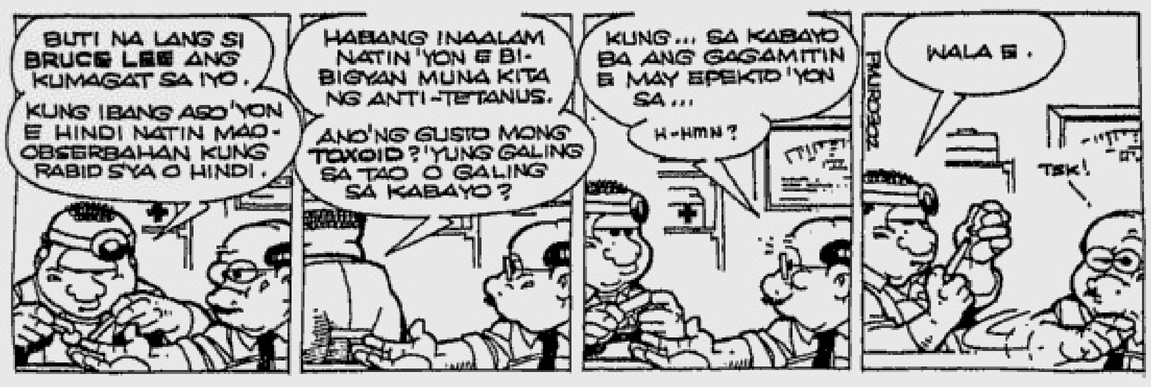
BY P.M. JUNIOR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PMJR032

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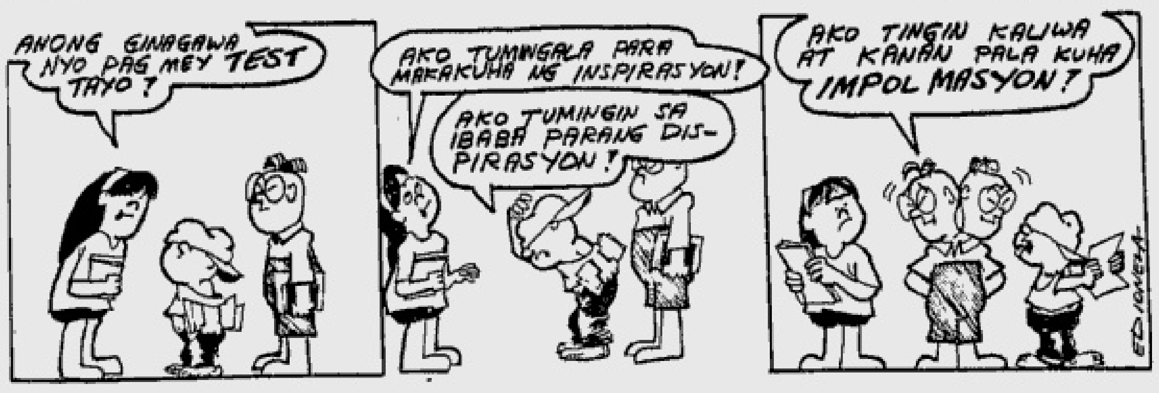
BY EDGAR DIONELA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ED IONELA

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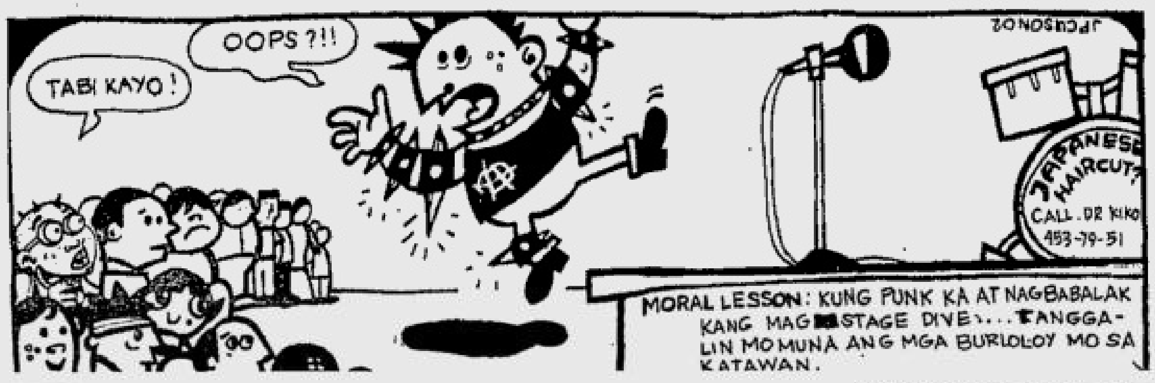
BY JOHN PAUL CUISON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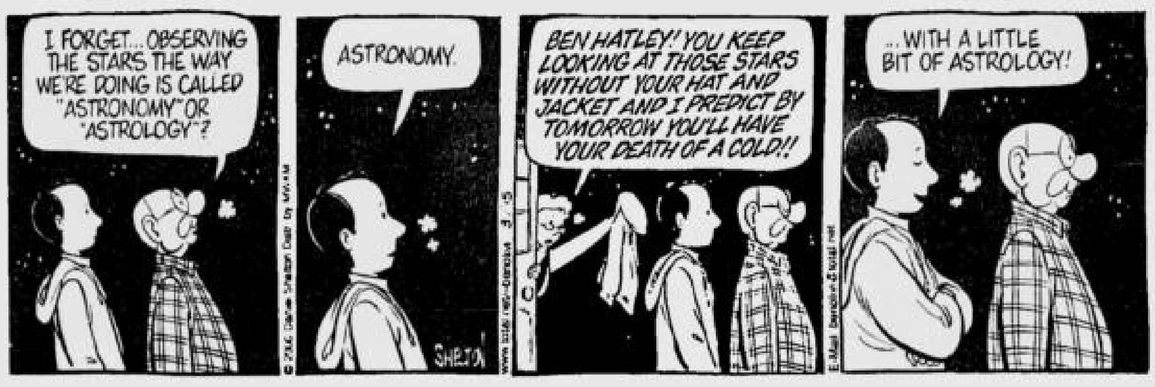
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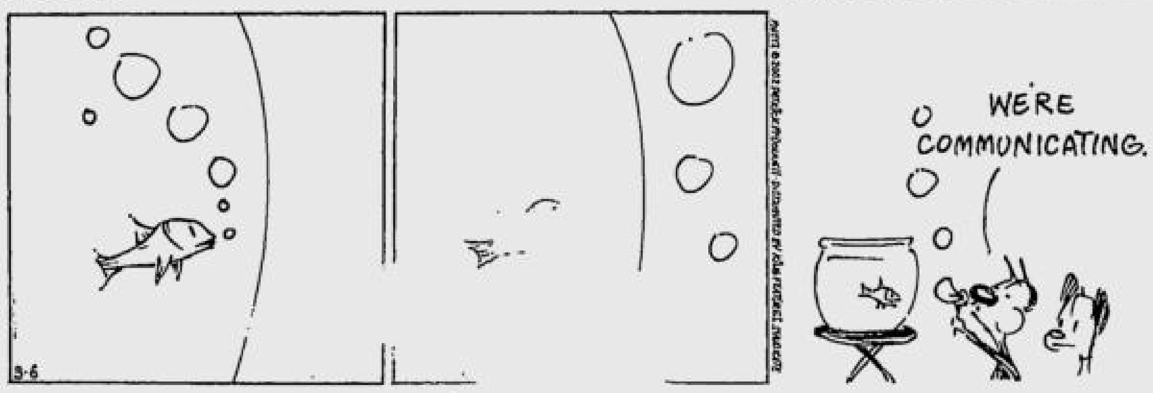
SHELTON
3-5

MUTTS

BY PATRICK McDONNELL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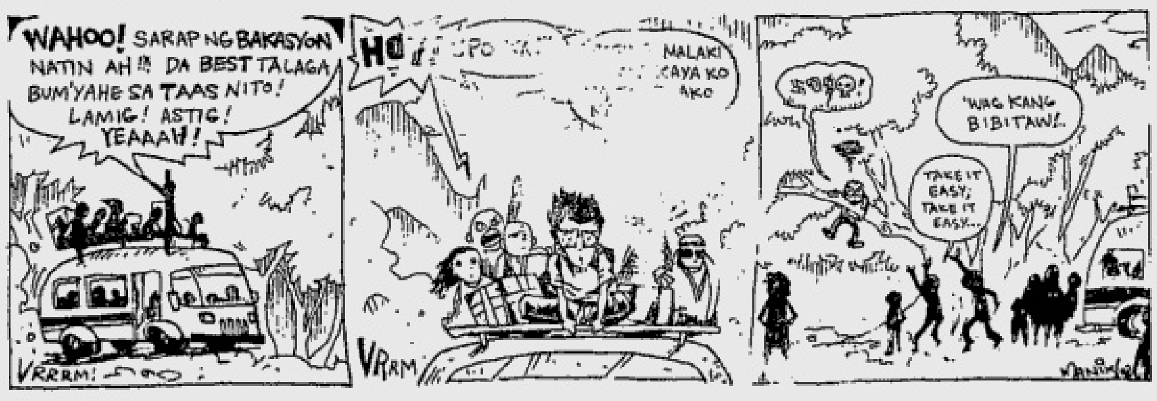
WE'RE COMMUNICATING.

KIKO MACHINE

BY MANIX ABRERA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VRRRM!
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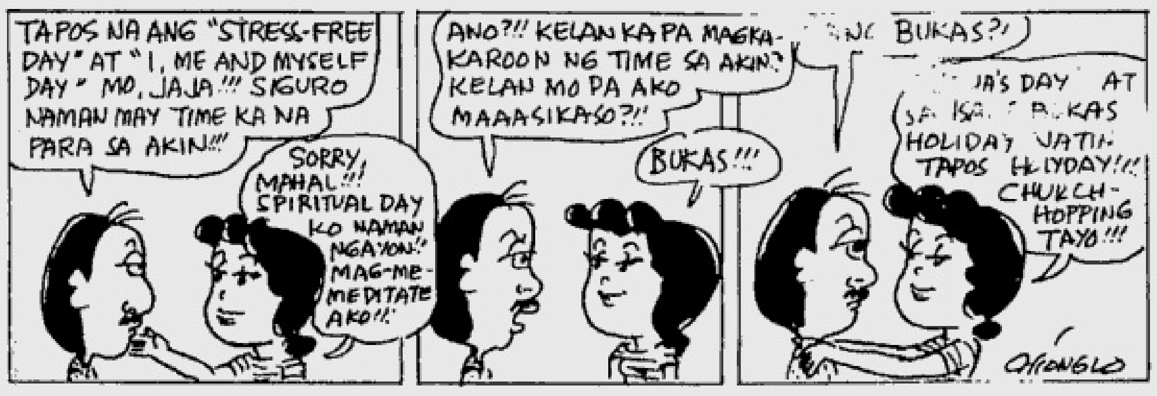
TAKE IT EASY; TAKE IT EASY...

LOVEKNOTS

BY ELIZABETH CHIONGLO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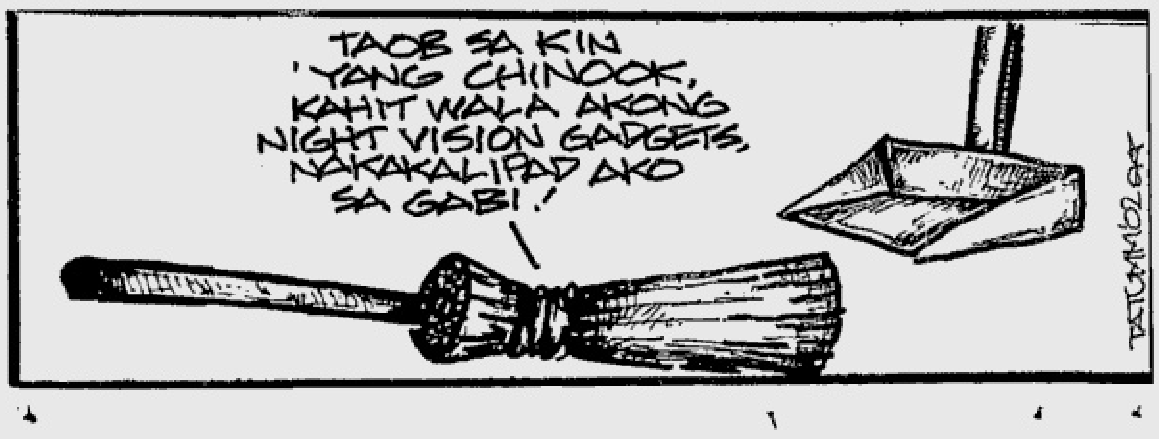
BUKAS!!!
BUKAS?!
JA'S DAY AT SA ISA BUKAS HOLIDAY NATIN TAPOS HOLYDAY!!! CHURCH-HOPPING TAYO!!!
CHIONGLO

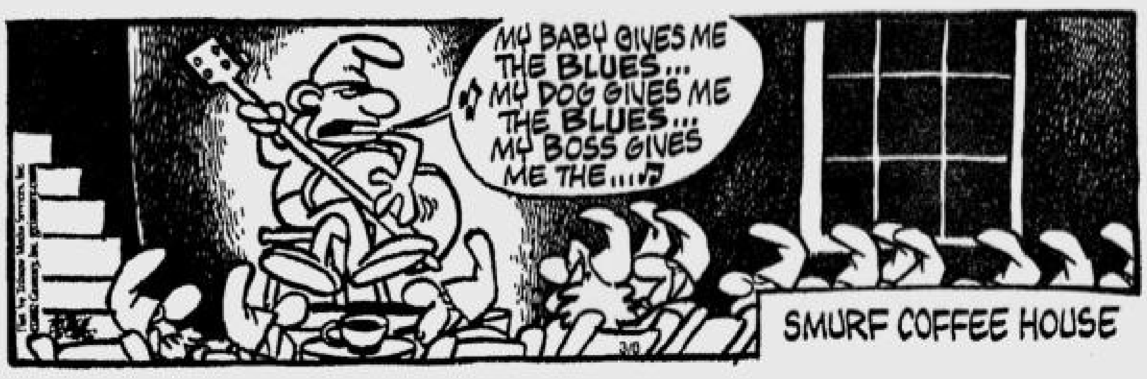
TULDOK

BY PAPU AND TATUM MILAMBILING


TAOB SA KIN 'YANG CHINOOK, KAHIT WALA AKONG NIGHT VISION GADGETS, NAKAKALIPAD AKO SA GABI!
TATUMM02

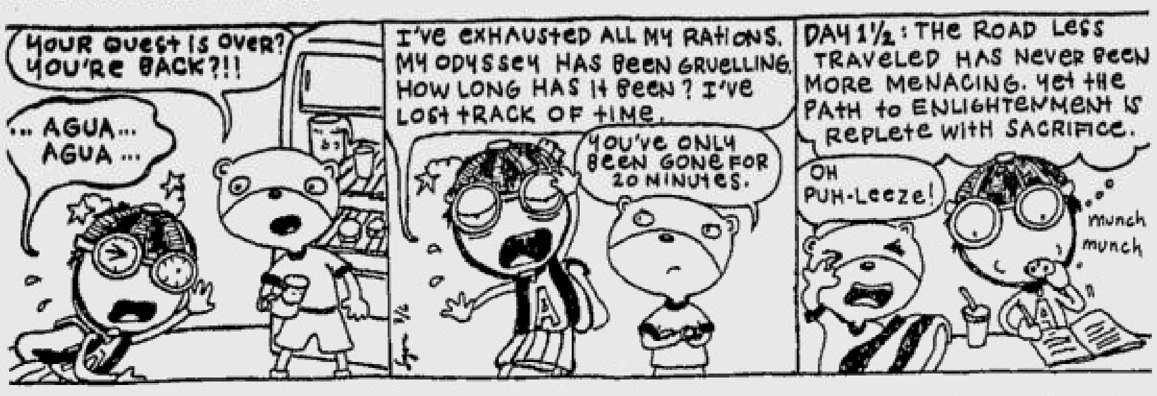
MOTHER GOOSE & GRIMM

BY MIKE PETERS


MY BABY GIVES ME THE BLUES... MY DOG GIVES ME THE BLUES... MY BOSS GIVES ME THE....
SMURF COFFEE HOUSE

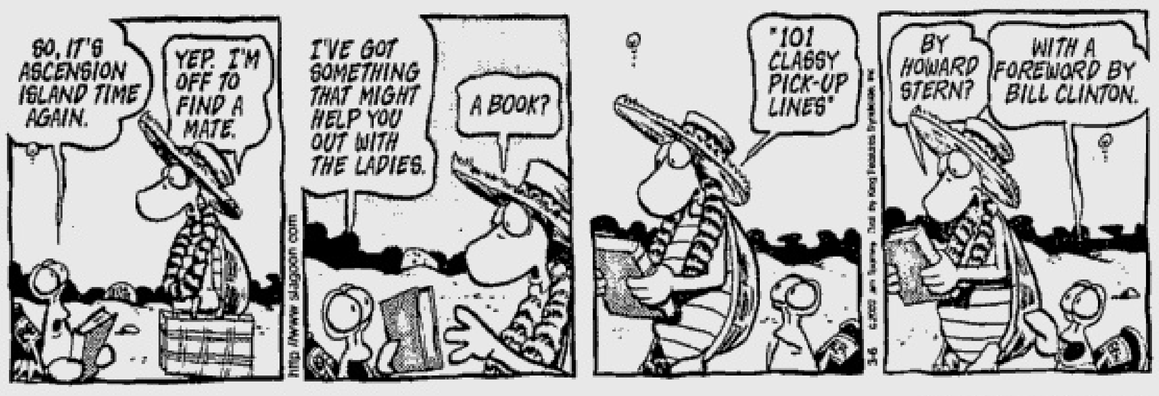
ATOMO AND WEBOY

BY LYRA GARCELLANO


YOUR QUEST IS OVER? YOU'RE BACK?!!
... AGUA... AGUA ...
I'VE EXHAUSTED ALL MY RATIONS. MY ODYSSEY HAS BEEN GRUELLING. HOW LONG HAS IT BEEN? I'VE LOST TRACK OF TIME.
YOU'VE ONLY BEEN GONE FOR 20 MINUTES.
DAY 1½: THE ROAD LESS TRAVELED HAS NEVER BEEN MORE MENACING. YET THE PATH TO ENLIGHTENMENT IS REPLETE WITH SACRIFICE.
OH PUH-LEEZE!
munch munch

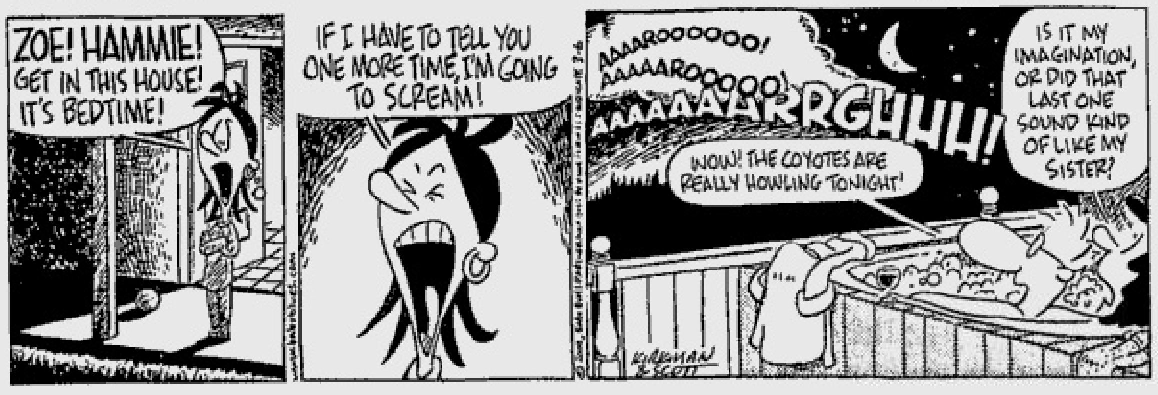
SHERMAN'S LAGOON

BY JIM TOOMEY


SO, IT'S ASCENSION ISLAND TIME AGAIN.
YEP. I'M OFF TO FIND A MATE.
I'VE GOT SOMETHING THAT MIGHT HELP YOU OUT WITH THE LADIES.
A BOOK?
"101 CLASSY PICK-UP LINES"
BY HOWARD STERN?
WITH A FOREWORD BY BILL CLINTON.
http://www.slagoon.com

BABY BLUES

BY JERRY SCOTT


ZOE! HAMMIE! GET IN THIS HOUSE! IT'S BEDTIME!
IF I HAVE TO TELL YOU ONE MORE TIME, I'M GOING TO SCREAM!
AAAAROOOOOO! AAAAAROOOOO! AAAAAAARRGHHH!
WOW! THE COYOTES ARE REALLY HOWLING TONIGHT!
IS IT MY IMAGINATION, OR DID THAT LAST ONE SOUND KIND OF LIKE MY SISTER?
KIRKMAN & SCOTT

HOROSCOPE

BY EUGENIA LAST

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: Rob Reiner, Ed McMahon, Tom Arnold, Stedman Graham

Happy Birthday: You'll be concerned with helping those in need this year. Be generous in a practical way and make a difference to those less fortunate. You will be ambitious and authoritative when dealing with professionals. Your numbers are 17, 28, 32, 35, 41, 47

ARIES (March 21-April 19): You will have a greater sense of what it is you want to do and a far more open and receptive attitude. The knowledge you take in today will be worth its weight in gold.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20): Don't be fooled by a lot of hype about an investment. Don't push to make financial changes; instead, prepare to accept the changes that are inevitable.

GEMINI (May 21-June 20): Uncertainties may cause you to question any partnerships that you are involved in. Take it nice and slow and don't jump to conclusions or make rash decisions.

CANCER (June 21-July 22): Focus on what you can do, not on what you can't. Put all your efforts into whatever job you are working on and you will make great strides. Stick to comfort food and pamper yourself

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22): Take the plunge and start to do something you enjoy. Let your creativity flourish. You will have a competitive edge today so don't hold back.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22): Avoid any turmoil going on at home. Get out and do things that you like to do. Take in a show or go shopping for something you've wanted for a long time but don't overspend in the process.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22): Talk is cheap and it will help you get what you want. The more you mingle the better the support you'll get. Positive changes can be made and you'll be surprised at how well things turn out.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21): Work, work and more work. You may not feel like doing all the things on your agenda but if you grit your teeth and dig in you'll have it all done in no time.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21): You can make a new start if you pull yourself together and focus on what's important to you today. Don't let anyone try to talk you out of what you know will be best for you.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19): Uncertainties regarding work may develop if you are evasive about what you are doing. Be upfront and you will stand a much better chance of getting the support required to follow your own ideas.

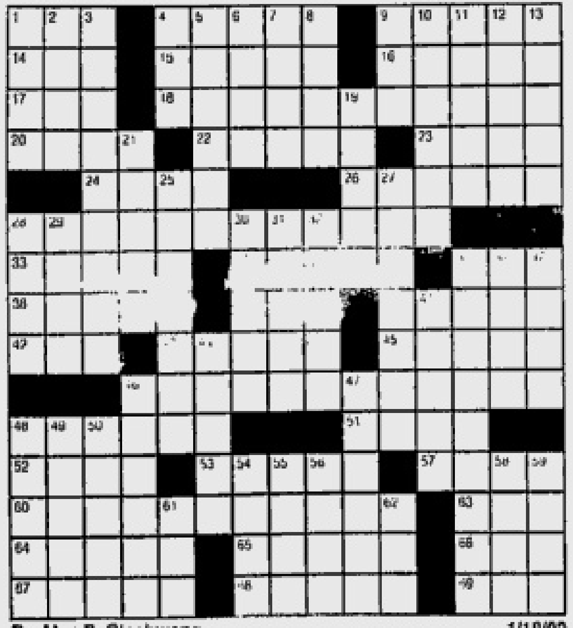
AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18): Sudden changes will be a welcome surprise. Put your ideas into motion and help those who just can't help themselves. You will feel good about yourself and the friendships you develop.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20): You may want to take a bit of a breather. You will have the discipline to take in a vast amount of information today but this isn't the time to try to start new projects or follow new avenues.

Birthday Baby: You are cautious and determined. You set your sights on something and go for it. You use common sense in order to achieve. You are responsible and persistent by nature.

DAILY CROSSWORD

TMSPuzzles@aol.com



By Alan P. Olschwang
Huntington Beach, CA

1/18/02

ACROSS

1 Chinese way
4 Type of toast
9 Curvy letters
14 Eurasian viper
15 Hunter in the sky
16 Lixiviate
17 Start of Charles Kettering quote
18 Part 2 of quote
20 Harmony, briefly
22 Became less tense
23 Secluded valley
24 Lending organs?
26 European peninsula
28 Part 3 of quote
33 Nelson or Campbell
34 Actor Nick
35 Audit expert's letters
38 Knight's mount
39 Opposite of SSW
40 State of rapture
42 Instant greenery
43 Slip away
45 Secular law
46 Part 4 of quote
48 Win back
51 Evaluate
52 Love god
53 Type of tiger or towel
57 Italian noble family
60 Part 5 of quote
63 End of quote
64 Lauder of cosmetics
65 Vigilant
66 End of auction?
67 Maudlin
68 "Demian" author
69 Ruby or Sandra

DOWN

1 Makes lace
2 Pale
3 Indefinite
4 Bovine greeting
5 Composer Bloch
6 Singer McCann
7 Men of the future?
8 Feed the kitty
9 Blighted tree
10 Ranked at Wimbledon
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12 Pathogenic bacteria
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56 Checks out
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61 Mystery-writer Josephine
62 Shoshone

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F	A	R	S	I	■	E	R	A	T	O	■	L	T	D
A	R	D	E	N	■	N	U	B	I	A	■	E	W	E
S	T	A	C	K	E	D	D	E	C	K	■	G	I	N
■	■	■	■	W	I	S	E	D	■	T	S	A	R	S
E	D	G	I	E	R	■	■	■	G	R	I	L	L	E
D	O	U	B	L	E	D	E	A	L	E	R	■	■	■
G	R	A	I	L	■	R	E	V	U	E	■	P	E	G
A	I	R	S	■	M	E	R	I	T	■	Y	E	L	L
R	A	D	■	B	A	S	I	S	■	M	E	D	I	A
■	■	■	H	O	U	S	E	O	F	C	A	R	D	S
S	C	R	A	W	L	■	■	■	E	C	H	O	E	S
T	R	O	L	L	■	D	W	E	L	L	■	■	■	■
Y	E	W	■	F	O	U	R	F	L	U	S	H	E	R
L	E	D	■	U	B	O	A	T	■	R	O	O	M	Y
E	L	Y	■	L	I	S	P	S	■	E	L	I	S	E

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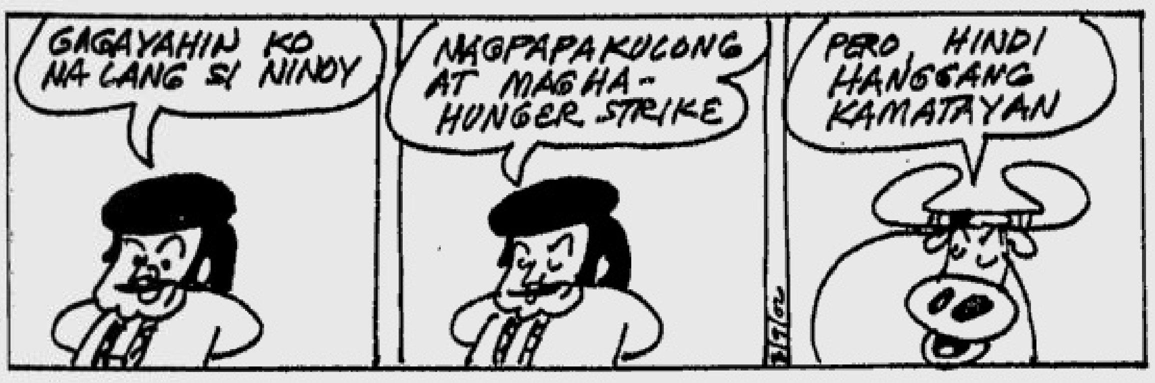
BY. JESS ABRERA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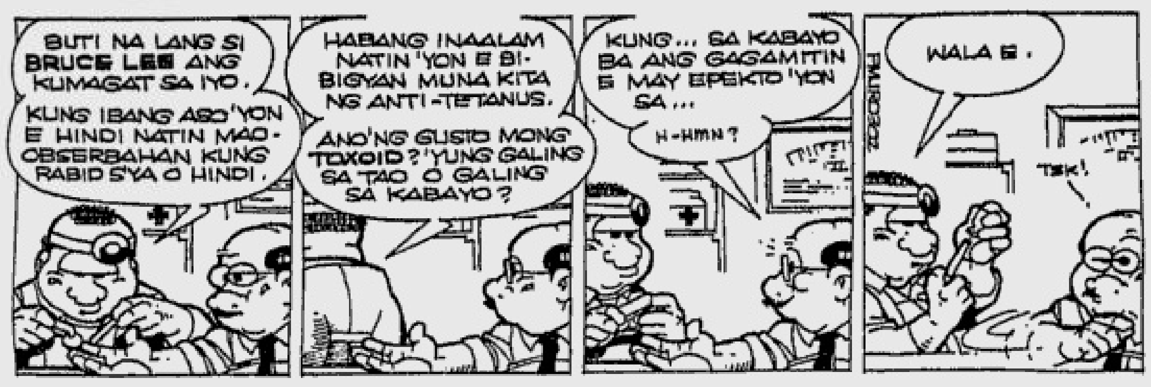
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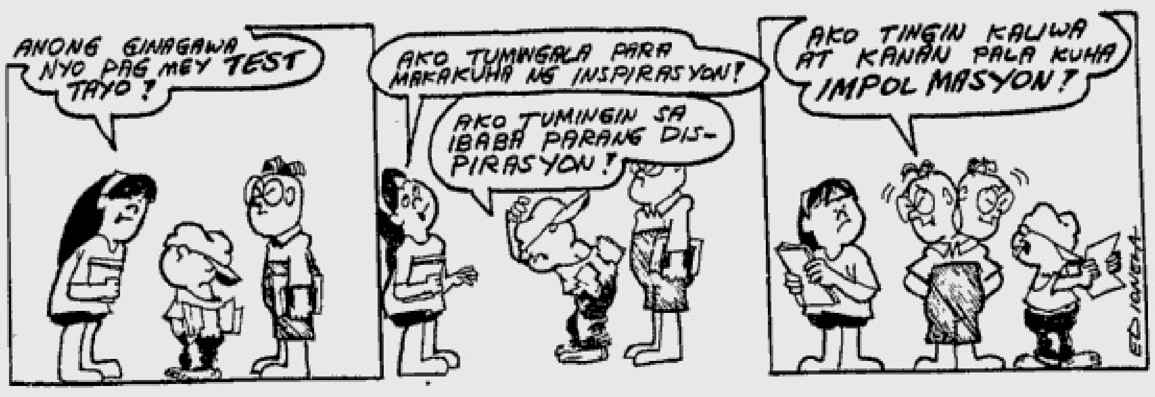
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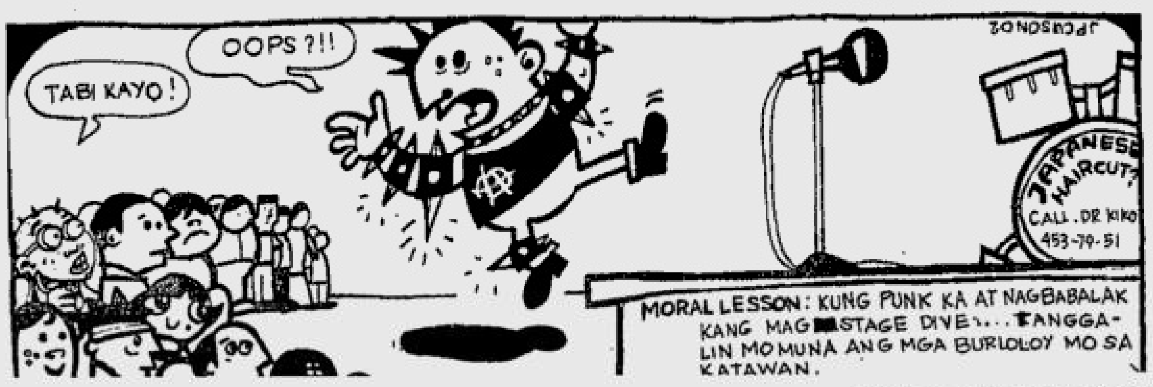
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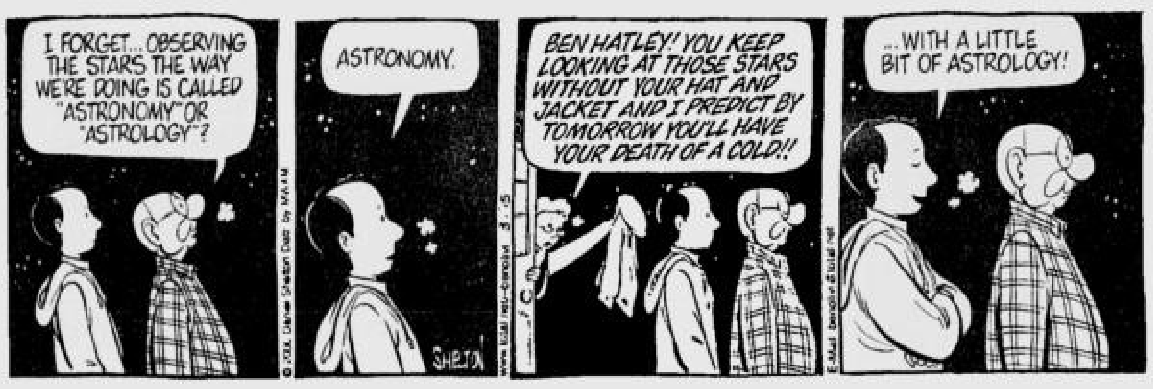
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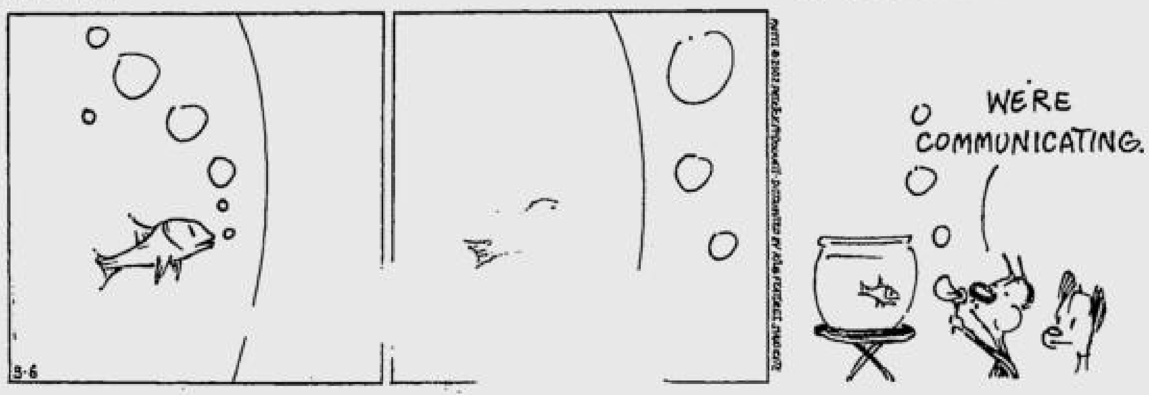
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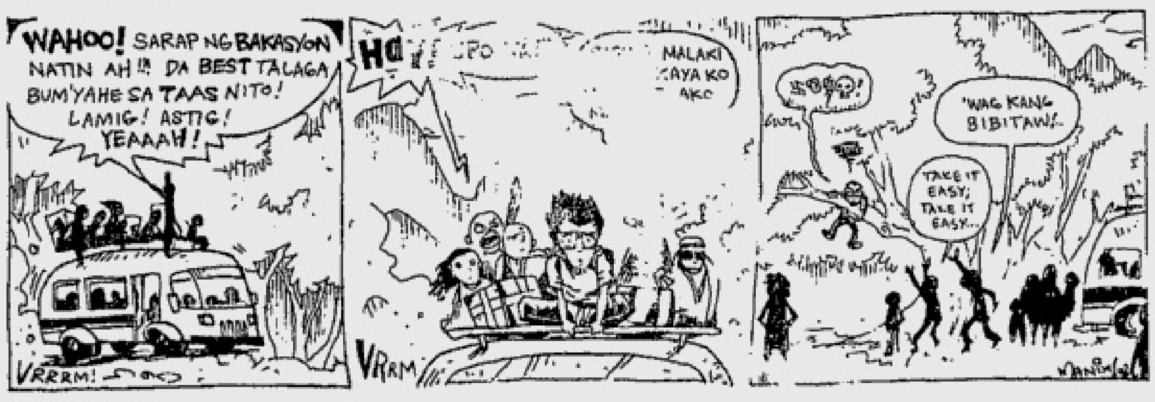
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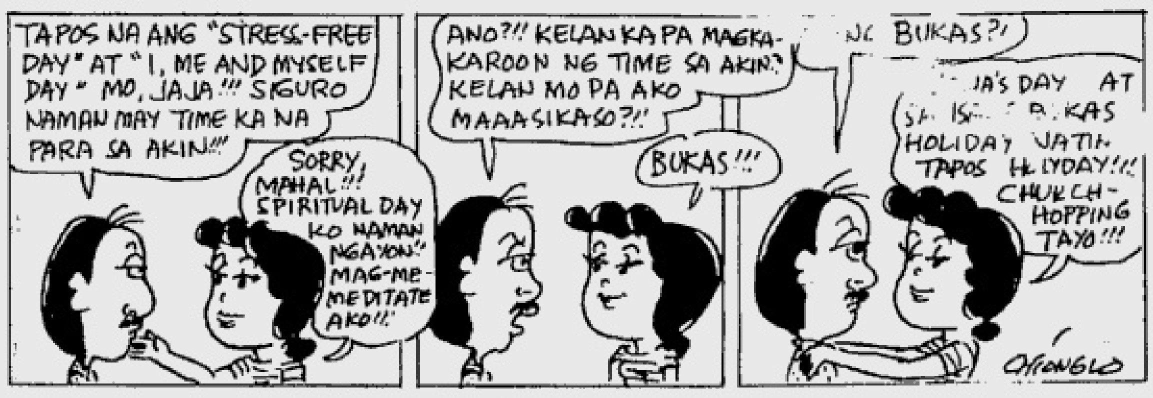
LOVEKNOTS

BY E[illegible]ZABETH CHIONGLO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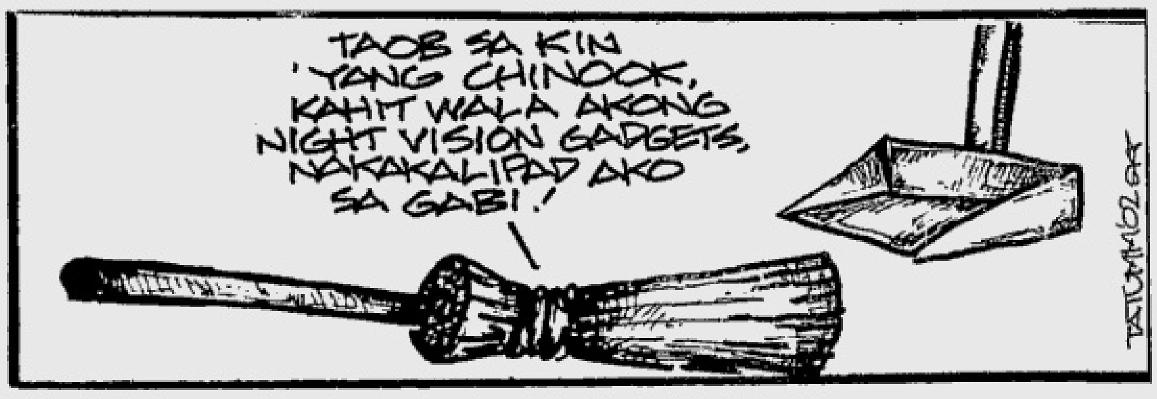
CHIONGLO

TULDOK

BY PAPU AND TATUM MILAMBILING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TATUMMOZ

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

From classics to FUNKY

A COZY hub of stores called Hip has opened at the second floor of the Power Plant Mall, Rockwell, Makati. Its 13 shops provide trendy and affordable fashion creations.

Lily Navarro's Babo offers the latest trends in clothes and accessories for girls in their teens and 20s.

Jonathan and Jennifer Young's Lhasa takes care of hip basics for young career women from their 20s upward.

Clad Shoppe, owned by Isabel Pimentel, features sexy and eclectic creations, with clever mixes of leather and lace, denim and lace, and many others in between—for all ages.

Engel Santos' Mix Clothing gives casual fashion that mixes the street with the sweet, for girls aged 15-30.

Reverse, a male-oriented boutique owned by Engel Santos and Caryll Diaz, goes for the extreme—funked up, jazzed up retro styles and lifestyle.

LEN Ampil, Trixie Ramirez, Adelle Flores of Rockwell Land Corp., Jeng Villon, Tessa Valdes, Trisha Salvador, Troy Montero and Dino Ampil

Geri Katigbak-Tirona's ever popular Underground promises more of the streetwear and clubwear that made its shop cool with the kids.

Dickies USA of American Star Apparel Inc., a US franchise owned by Bureau of Clothes Inc., gives an American take on the leisure lifestyle.

Jeje Quizon's Sole offers trendy shoes for males with a penchant for the classic as well as the extreme.

Janylin, owned by Jeinovette Janeo and Cecilia Santos, offers high fashion, new style and classic quality.

DTour, owned by partners Tessa Valdes, Maielle Manimtim and Jen Morales offers fashion-forward clothing for the young and the young at heart.

Liezl Enriquez's Limited offers an unlimited range of the latest trend choices with accessories to match each outfit for women aged 14-40.

FASHION from Don't Miss

Girl Shoppe, owned by Nelsie Guevarra and Voltaire Villareal, offers alternative fashion and hair accessories for girls in their teens and 20s.

And don't miss Adora Subido's Don't Miss, the exceptionally cool shop for streetwear and stylewear for free-spirited girls of any age who want to be in style, be different and feel and look great.

Hip Leasing Corp. is owned by retailers Gary and Trixie Ramirez, Bong and Jeng Villon and Dino Ampil.

Hip's coterie of lifestyle stores offer choices that range from the functional to the truly funky. Hip formally opened its doors with a fun and funky fashion show on Feb. 23. Hosted by Claudine Trillo and Pia Guanio, it showcased selections from all Hip stores.

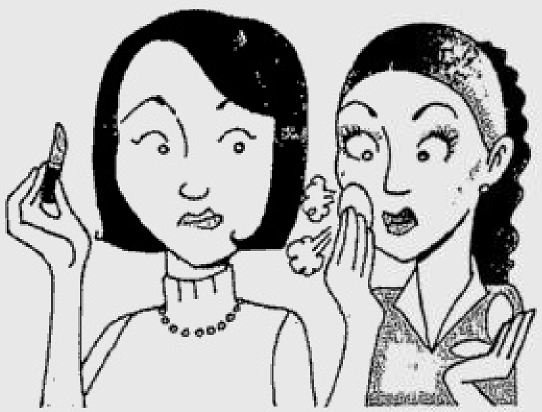


ILLUSTRATION: ALBERT RODRIGUEZ

The no-makeup effect

Make Over
911
Kinny
Salas

MAKEUP artist Bobbi Brown made a survey on what particular "look" one specifically likes with regard to women's faces, and the unanimous answers were: long eyelashes, sparkling eyes, smooth skin, rosy cheeks and moist soft pink lips.

But how many women have boyfriends/husbands who claim to prefer women with no makeup, but look at you inquiringly when barefaced and ask, "Are you sick?" What they really mean by no makeup is that natural look. I have discovered three cosmetic formulas that will help you achieve the flawless no-makeup effect.

Foundation. Everyone knows that it should match your skin tone perfectly for that invisible flawless perfection, but a lot of us have less-than-perfect skin and are fighting oil because of the hot humid weather. Our tendency is to use powder foundation or lay the loose powder on too thick.

Switch to liquid foundations in sheer, oil-free formula for those with minor skin imperfections. For those who long for medium to heavy coverage, look for a matte liquid formula or a cream foundation. I have oily skin and use cream foundation like Watercolors, Joe Blasco or Cinema Secrets. Not even women know I put on foundation. My skin looks soft, moist and clear. I don't put loose powder and just touch up the shine later in the day, very lightly, with pressed powder. Tip: Blend with finger or latex wedge sponge. Doubles as concealer, too.

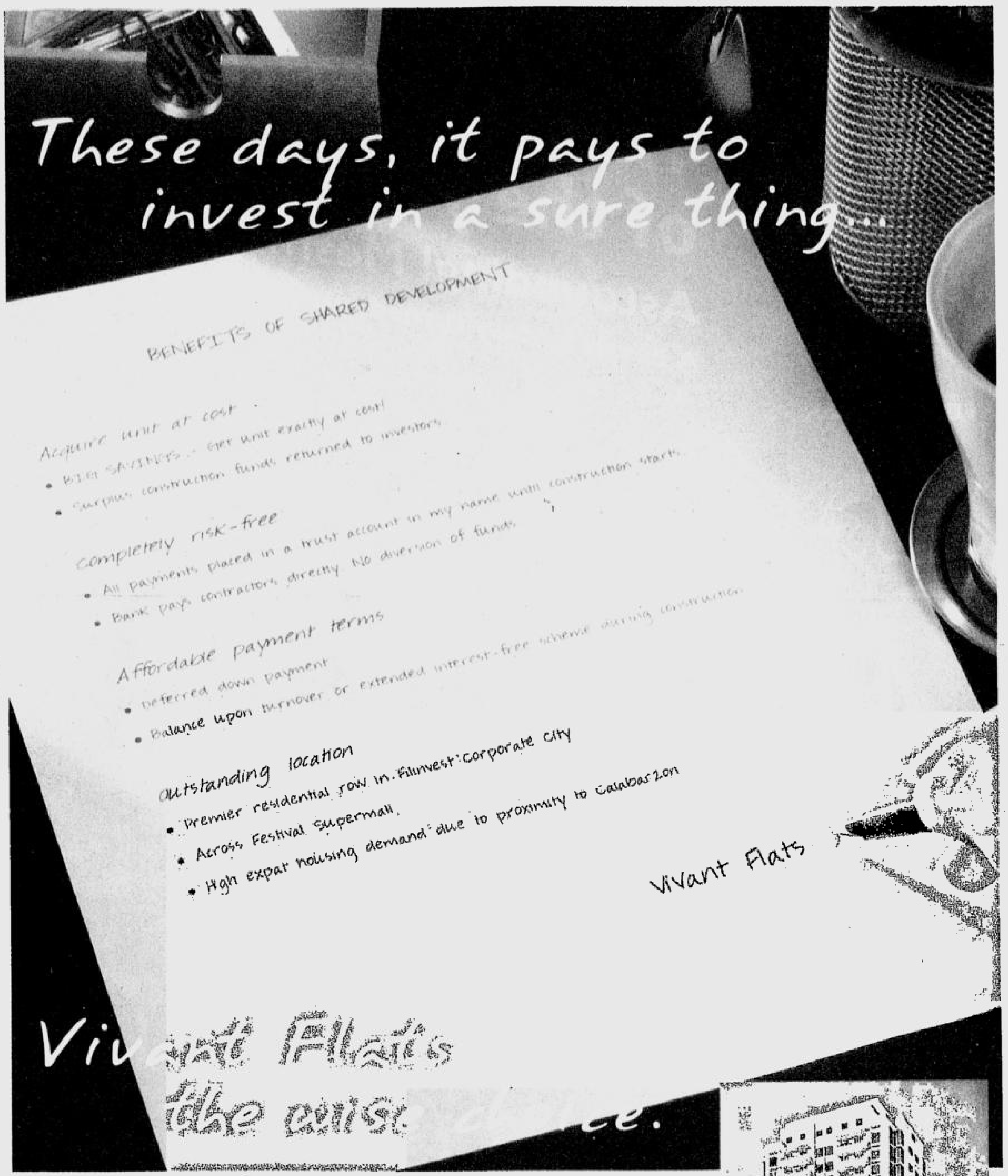
Blush. Ditch the powder blush. If one longs for a glow that looks like it came from within, powder blush can't give you that. For those with dry skin, use cream blush; for normal to oily skin, gel blush is the way to go. This is also known as cheek tints.

Brands that carry cream blush are Stila, Max Factor, Revlon. Famous gel blushes are Benetint by Benefit and TarteFlush. The one readily available here and is reasonably priced is Bodyshop's lips and cheeks gel. Try the red shades like Crimson Crush or Red Rush for these formulas, but apply only a tiny dot and blend on cheek area with fingertips or sponge. Apply on bare skin or above foundation, but never above pressed powder.

Lipstick. For those who haven't found your perfect enhanced nude shade, switch to lipgloss. It's the best thing that ever happened to my ultra dry lips. Coverage is also adjustable so there are less chances of getting stuck with the wrong shade unless, of course, the color is too pale and frosted. I recommend glosses with wands because they are the least messy to use. Check out Beauty Bar's Bloom lip-glosses that are down to P375 from P650. This is the coverage you can adjust with Revlon. For Bloom, my favorites are pucker, pout and Bordeaux, and Revlon-Schmutz and Nothing. Real bargains are HerBench glosses in Hip and Naughty for P100. Want Clear? P55 at Fashion 21 teens lip glosses with flavors.

What about sparkling eyes? Curl your lashes to open them up and set with clump-free mascara.

For any questions or products you want to road-test, write to Make Over 911, PDI Lifestyle or fax at 897-4805.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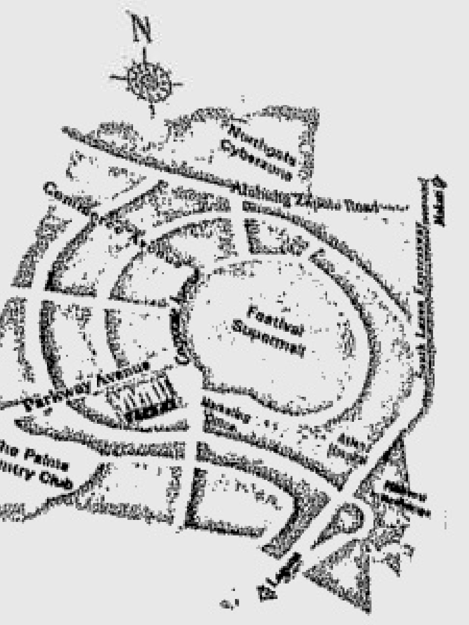

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McKnight discovers his heroic side

Text and photo by Maui V. Reyes
2bU! Correspondent

"PEOPLE are probably going to think, 'Oh great, what? Can he fly? Can he see through people's clothes or something?' " says Brian McKnight, rolling his eyes. He is explaining his latest album's title, "superhero," to two young journalists.

Brian McKnight, the extraordinary crooner with a soulful voice and down-to-earth attitude, comes off, surprisingly, as the buddy you've always wanted to have. He's smart, quick-witted, funny and does not look like someone who has sold millions of albums worldwide (although a Porsche and numerous bikes back home will attest to his success).

"You can view ['superhero'] as a diary of the past year of my life, and these songs as a beacon for me to try to reach higher," he says. "I had a tremendous sense of fun making this album, and I didn't get all caught up in the notion of trying to duplicate past hits or necessarily sticking to 'my sound.' This time, I said, 'Okay. What can I do to make things more fun?'"

So he ventured into other aspects of his music. The classic rock-inspired track, "Superhero," touches on McKnight's love for rock and reveals his liking for bands such as AC/DC, Van Halen and The Who. "I'm sure people haven't heard this side of me before, but I really wanted to showcase my guitar-playing and show a side of me that's different," he says. 'N Sync's Justin Timberlake joins him in the track "My Kind of Girl," adding a pop twist to the smooth love song.

The New York native and self-proclaimed comic-book addict signed his first record deal at 19. His 1992 debut, "Brian McKnight," went platinum, and was quickly followed by "I Remember You" in 1995. He did other production gigs, such as the hit "You Will Know" from the "Jason's Lyric" soundtrack, a duet with the lovely Vanessa Williams on "Love Is" and with the diva herself, Diana King, on the soundtrack "When We Were Kings."

While in Manila for two high-energy concerts, McKnight talked to 2bU! about "superheroes," 'N Sync and why he didn't go to his prom.

Brian McKnight cannot fly and does not have X-ray vision but he has saved at least one life

You once said you called the album "superhero" because you wanted to pay tribute to everyday heroes, such as firemen and teachers, and how you wanted to be a hero like them. Did the events of Sept. 11 reinforce that feeling?

The concept for this album came up even before Sept. 11. You know the things that you do? You never realize the impact that you have. I was sitting in traffic one day—which you guys have all the time since traffic here is worse than L.A.—and I looked at the other cars and said, "Right now, at this moment, we're all connected." But then you think, what's that guy's life like when he gets home? And if I honk my horn right now and that person's really aggravated, would I [be] doing something that [would make] them go off the handle? When people are this far away from the breaking point 24 hours a day, you might be the catalyst. And at the same time they may need something inspiring for you to say to them that could change their whole life. The reason this came about was I was doing this concert where this young lady in a wheelchair came up to me and she said she got into a car accident on her way to my concert the last time I was there. And the whole time she was in a coma, her family kept on playing my albums because she said I was her favorite artist. She came out of the coma with my music. The whole time she's crying and I'm crying. She said, "Your songs helped me get through, that's why I'm alive," and I felt like I made a real difference in this person's life, and that made me feel like a superhero.

Your songs are mostly about love. Did you ever think of doing a Marvin Gaye?

I've been asked that before. When Marvin Gaye wrote "What's Going On," it was [about what was going on at the time]. And even though it seems like we've gotten really far away from that, I think we're blind to the fact that we've gotten so much farther than where we're really trying to go. See, it's really not what people want, it's always what somebody's going to give them. So I sort of give it to them in doses. So in some ways I do, but on another level I try to write songs that transcend the "you and I" relationships, where you can plug in maybe [thoughts] about your son, or loving your life, or your love for your parents and someone you wish you could have or someone you've lost. I try to think of every situation.

Have you ever written about something you've never experienced?

Yeah, I do that all the time. (Laughs) I think if you don't have an imagination, you're very limited. Most of the songs I wrote before were about things I've never experienced, because I was so young. I was really about not experiencing anything, and I'd write about things I wanted to experience. (Laughs) But I think everything I write is sort of based on some experience I've had.

How was your collaboration with Justin Timberlake like?

It was great. I mean, Justin and I have been friends for a long time...

And you beat him in basketball, too.

Yeah, well. (Laughs) Last week we didn't play against each other. I mean, well, I played college basketball, so you know, I can play. (Laughs) So it's not a big deal. He plays on our team every now and then so it's better to play with us than against us.

How about working in the studio?

You know, I would have to say that 'N Sync, all-around, with the exception of Take 6, is probably the most talented group I've worked with.

Do you think it's unfair that critics bash such hard-working bands?

Yeah. People will criticize anyone who's successful, but I think this is one instance where they're there because they're talented. You'll never be cute and good-looking your whole life. At some point you'll have to stand on something that has substance. And with 'N Sync, all you have to do is listen to them sing live and watch their show live. I mean, the first time I went to see them I was all biased, going like, "Aw, another boy band, blah blah. Backstreet Boys, blah." But when I went to the show I was like, "Okay, wait a second!" And I went back and listened to the records and worked with them. I realized these guys had lots of talent..

Who would you want to collaborate with?

Well, it's not really about who I want; it's about who wants to work with me. (Smiles) If I get a phone call... I mean, I just worked with Willy Nelson, so you know.

So if Marilyn Manson gave you a ring...

Well, probably... not... him. (Laughs) That would be a little off. I mean, like when Clive Davis gave me a call about Alicia Keys, I didn't know who she was. I've never heard of her. He said, "I got this young, talented female and I thought you'd like to work with her." And I met her and she seemed like she knew what she wanted to do. It doesn't matter to me how big or how small as long as we can come up with something.

Right now a lot of kids are having their prom. Got any prom stories?

I never went to a prom. Well, okay, here's what you have to understand. When I was in high school... (Laughs) This is really sad to say... Right around Christmas, you break up. Then after Christmas, you get back together. Then right around birthdays, you break up. Then you get back together. You know why you do that? So you don't have to buy anybody presents. (Laughs) You know, around prom time! It wasn't really important to me back then. I was doing other things. Plus, you had to dress up and take somebody.

C'mon, it's the one night of the year you get to be James Bond.

I was that everyday. (Laughs)

But if you could do it all over again, who would you take?

It was tough because I was doing so much. I would go through the whole cheer-leading squad in like, a year and a half. (Laughs) I was a mess, you know. I really was. And I have to blame my older brothers for that because they showed me the ropes. (Laughs)

Brian McKnight's album, "superhero," is out under MCA Universal. A special repackaged album that includes his duet with Martin Nievera will be out in March

E-mail the author at volcanogirl28@hotmail.com

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"WE WILL ROCK YOU." Traa, Marcos, Wuv and Sonny

PHOTOS BY ALDWIN ASPILLERA

They were hanging on mommy's milk while P.O.D. was rockin' shows in San Diego.—Sonny on the present music scene

It may not be Christian rock, but it's music that uplifts

By Maui V. Reyes
2bU! Correspondent

"TOMORROW we're starting a Buddhist rock band," Sonny says, shaking his head. The lead vocalist of the band P.O.D. is referring to the "Christian rock" label that critics have stamped on their music.

"When you break everything down, there are so many different elements to it. Do you love reggae music, hip-hop, jazz? That's what it comes down to," his cousin and drummer Wuv points out. "I know this music is heavy and it's loud... but that's all groove."

There is more than one reason critics are shoving the Holy Bible at P.O.D. (that's Payable on Death). First, their music talks about sex, drugs and mass murders—and why they are wrong. Other rock bands may cuss at ex-girlfriends and whine that life sucks, but P.O.D. sings about how great it is to be alive and to be young. While Fred Durst gives the audience the finger, P.O.D. makes the peace sign. And, of course, there's Wuv's open admission that he has found God.

"My dad was one of the biggest drug dealers in south San Diego," Wuv reveals. "He was living on the streets for three years before God actually touched his heart. After that, he would bring me to church and I started to see God change my dad's life. Also, God totally restored my parents' marriage."

Wuv's rekindled faith brought the band together. Wuv and his friend Marcos held jamming sessions, which Wuv's cousin Sonny went to in order to keep Wuv out of trouble. When Wuv suggested that Sonny join the duo, Marcos was reluctant at first. "I was like, 'Dude, Sonny never talks to anybody in the first place. How does he get in front of an audience?'" recalls Marcos.

Sonny agrees. "I had no desire to be in front of people and sing and rap or whatever. If anything, I was just goofing around with my friends, doing that during house parties or whatever. It wasn't like we were in a band or a group. So when we first got together, I was just nervous." So nervous, in fact, that during their first gig, Sonny had his back to the audience.

"That show was just awkward," Marcos says. "It was at this club in San Diego called Soma, and the guy who owned the place was, like, 'My band isn't going to show up tomorrow. I need a band to play.' And I just happened to be there and I heard him and I went, 'I have a band!' And the next thing you know, Wuv's out buying a new drum set. I messed up on the guitar and I had to wait one whole round for the whole band so I could remember my part, and Sonny had his back turned."

The band gained the confidence to perform live soon after recruiting their bass player, Traa. Inspired by their friends who did indie recordings, the band decided to put up their own label, Rescue Records, produce their own albums and do their own promotions. They released the EP's "Brown" (which sold 30,000 pieces) and "The Warriors," which caught the ear of Atlantic Records. The company released their major record debut, "The Fundamental Elements of Southtown." The album went platinum in the United States and earned P.O.D. spots in tours like Ozzfest, and gigs as an opening act for bands like Green Day and the Mighty Mighty Bosstones.

In the last two years, P.O.D. has proven worthy of platinum status. Their latest offering, "Satellite," boasts of such hits as "Alive" and "Youth of the Nation," both giving that certain "high" that people just can't get enough of. Written during the shootings at Columbine High School, the single "Youth of the Nation" has already pushed the album to double platinum status in the US. "It was an emotional situation," Marcos says. "I'm the only one that doesn't have kids, but it was, like, 'That could have been my sister.'"

On a recent visit to Manila, the band found the time to chat with 2bU!

MARCOS, guitarist extraordinaire

Do you ever feel that a song you have written is too personal to be shared with a lot of people?

Wuv: I think most of the time we feel that way when we go out and play the songs, like when we go to a different country or a different part of the world, and you see people crying. It makes you take a step back and you're like, "Ddamn, people are feeling it!" Most of our songs are uplifting songs and they make you feel good. Like "Alive," the song was called "Beautiful" before the lyrics were written because the music was so beautiful.

Did you ever scrap a song because it didn't go well with the message you wanted to convey?

Sonny: During recording, when everybody's jamming in the room, and it doesn't feel like it's going anywhere. It's funny how a song can change just by adding a different part.

Traa: There was this one song we wrote a long time ago, and then Marcos played it during a sound check. We thought, "That's a really bad riff!" But then we were just feeling it during that moment. Music, when it feels like it's bad, we won't push it.

Wuv: Yeah, it's like, "This sucks, dude, forget about it!"

Sonny: Nothing is ever forced.

I know you guys get a lot of crap about being a "Christian rock" [band]...

Wuv: You know, for us, we don't even know what Christian rock sounds like. What we believe in, what our faith is, that's all individual to us. Like what Sonny said before, even if we weren't playing rock 'n' roll, that's who we are individually. If I were home chillin' in San Diego right now, I'd still be the same person. We just happen to make music that's positive, [unlike] other rock 'n' roll bands that have to have demons and blood coming out of their mouths. So, yeah, P.O.D. is different. We're positive and we sing about things that are real to us, and people notice that, so they tend to look at what's behind it. And if that's our faith and it makes us that way then that's cool. We don't really care if people categorize us, because they'll do it anyway.

It's discriminating, really. I mean, they don't call other

IT/ p.D2

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It may not be Christian rock, but it's music that uplifts

From page D1

bands "Buddhist bands."

Marcos: It's like, The Beastie Boys are what? "Buddhist rap"?

Sonny: U2, you know, when they first started... now they're just one of the best bands in the world.

You can't deny that people *do* label you. Do you feel extra pressure on you since you're supposed to set a good example by being called a "Christian band"?

Sonny: You know what, we're nobody's heroes. We make music, and if you listen to our album, and feel good, and take something from it, and be blessed by it... I believe that's why we write music. But don't base your decisions or how you live your life according to whether we make mistakes or not, or whether we mess up.

Wuv: It's just rock 'n' roll!

Marcos: We don't make an issue out of it. People like to categorize stuff, that's how society is. You walk into a store and you got "rock," "soul," "hip-hop." So then it's like, "Oh, they believe in something! What do they believe in? God? Oh my God, they're Christian rock!" We're just a rock band.

SONNY and Wuv discuss the music scene.

Sonny: I bet if we weren't playing this kind of music, they wouldn't call us a Christian band.

Marcos: We'll be the first to say that the Christian Rrock scene is pretty cheesy. I mean, if you look at our CD collection, you won't be seeing much of that. It's kind of lame, man. Except for Wuv's "Striper" record.

Sonny: Wuv's got it all on vinyl. *(Laughs)*

Got any good tour stories?

Marcos: Oh, we got plenty. We got some Singapore stories...

Sonny: Anybody who's not intimidated to let us play on the same stage as them, we'll play for them.

Wuv: God bless them. (Laughter) There was this one time when we did a show in Virginia Beach and we played on the second story of this huge building. When we got to our second song, the kids were going off so hard the whole second floor just collapsed. All the kids had to move close to the wall, like, 1,500 kids going, "boom, boom, boom." And the middle was, like, cranked.

Marcos: I think the show that's most memorable to me would be the recent Youth of the Nation tour in Atlanta, Georgia. Sonny just floated all the way across this mini-arena, and got on the soundboard. The band was on the stage and we did "Alive." And the whole crowd was singing with him.

Sonny: I got to see what the crowd saw.

You said you deeply respect past musicians because they have "more substance." What do you think of the present music scene?

Marcos: I think it's cookie-cutter rock 'n' roll.

Wuv: No, there are a bunch of bands that we like, like our friends that we respect. Incubus, Papa Roach, Deftones, Korn. We're friends with all those guys and we enjoy their music. But it's not the music that inspired us to pick up our instruments and play. Most of the bands of today are like, just... (Laughs) friggin' babies in their mommys' tummies!

Sonny: They were hanging on mommy's milk while P.O.D. was rockin' shows in San Diego.

Wuv: That's why we like the bands that people don't even know anymore. Like Bad Brains and 24/7 Spies, and all the reggae bands we listen to like Eek a Mouse, Third World, Santana. All those bands that had something to say, they were real. They're still around and those guys are going to stay around forever. Like, working with HR from Bad Brains was such an honor for us. It wasn't like, "Oooh, let's get someone to work on the record to help sell the record." I mean, not a lot of kids know who Bad Brains are. And it would be great if a kid picks up the record and [sees HR in the credits], and would want to pick up *their* records. For us it was just a tribute to these bands that we loved to listen to and still listen to until now.

Marcos: Also shows some integrity on our part. We got a record that went platinum. We could have gotten a bunch of people like Fred Durst or Chester of Linkin Park. But we decided to go for people who influenced us and, even though not too many people know who they are, for us, that just makes us really happy.

P.O.D. gets up from the couch and proceeds to the door. Traa opens the door and points at the long line of media people waiting to get their own 15 minutes with the band. Two nights after the interview, they would rock Le Pavilion so hard, making all the kids get up on their feet and chant along with the band. But for now, they have to explain the whole Christian rock thing to every single journalist, every single DJ and VJ... until everyone realizes it's all about the music.

E-mail the author at volcanogirl28@hotmail.com

'Survivor 4' promises to be one wacky ride

From page D4

The Marquesas, which is a group of islands 930 miles off Tahiti, serves as the most breathtaking backdrop for the reality TV show so far. Aside from that, the show promises to be more different and difficult: there'd be no water and food rations for the contestants this time. However, early on in the pilot episode, something smelly happens, and it reaches my nose almost as fast as you can say "planted chickens."

The Survivors have just reached the island of Nuku Hiva, the largest in the Marquesas, and they have camped as two tribes—the Maraamu and Rotu. The Maraamu tribe is composed of Gina (nature guide), Hunter (FedEx pilot), Patricia (truck assembler), Peter (bowling alley owner), Rob (construction worker), Sarah (account manager), Sean (teacher) and Vecepia (office manager). The Rotu tribe has Gabriel (bartender), John (registered nurse), Kathy (real estate agent), Neleh (student), Paschal (judge), Robert (limousine driver), Tammy (crime reporter) and Zoe (fishing boat captain). Over at the Maraamu, Rob hears something cackle, and says something like, "You hear that? That's a turkey over there. *Ahm ded seerius!*" Being of this country, I know it is a chicken and so instantly, I stereotype Rob as a dumb good-looking guy. Dumb in a nice and funny way, more like Joey of the hit series "Friends." So he runs off to where the sound is coming from and sees that it is in fact a chicken. However, he isn't able to catch it because in his own words, "the rooster took off like a 747," and he says this like a child who has seen a bubble for the first time. Anyway, I'm sure there are chickens in the Marquesas, but a solitary chicken near the camp? Sounds more like a Mark Burnett-produced chicken to me.

"OKAY, SO WHERE'S THE TURKEY?" Sarah and Rob hunt for lunch.

BORED, the Rotu tribe whiles away time do by playing Pick Up Sticks.

Earlier on, Hunter discusses where one can best set up a fire, taking note of where "the prevailing wind" is coming from. After hearing those words, Rob chuckles and teases him for using weatherman terms, probably because he's not one to use such terms ever in his life. Basically, he makes Silas ("Survivor 3") look like Einstein.

Alpha male

Now, Hunter is a guy's guy and an alpha male all in one. He's not just a former US strike-fighter pilot, but he also looks like Tom Cruise, just take off a few inches from the former's nose. But Sean, a teacher from Harlem, New York, doesn't like the way he dictates things around, since according to him, he is an alpha male himself. But Vecepia and Gina have already looked up to Hunter as their leader with Gina swooning over and declaring her love for him (only to the camera). Meanwhile, she, the watermelon queen/seed-spitting champion, doesn't look bad herself. In fact, she can clearly pass off as one of the Corr sisters, having a resemblance to Caroline. (E! reported that Hunter and Gina did hook up after all.)

But it is not their love team that is brewing. It is that of Rob and Sarah. The latter, who has been described in various ways by Sean, comes across in the show as a big flirt who can't seem to keep her hands off Rob. I don't know what Sean's problem is with her big breasts. He keeps saying things like, "Aside from having two big flotation devices, she's no good to the group," and other statements referring to "them." And he says them like he is sourgraping for not having one (or two, for that matter). Stupid Sean doesn't realize this makes him look phony, especially after doing all that "Praise God!" and baptism thing in the water after reaching the camp. If he were really a Christian, he wouldn't have been that judgmental. Anyway, it would be nice to have both Sean and Sarah longer on the show since I'm sure they'd spice things up with major arguments, similar to the Jerri-Keith pairing on "Survivor 2."

Peter, the first guy to get booted out, is given a dose of his own medicine. You don't discuss to the whole tribe who you think deserves to be kicked out first. Thinking that his tribe has to be stronger, he implies that Patricia, being the oldest, should go first. And to think, Peter hasn't even made any alliance yet. So overall, the Maraamu tribe is a bunch of good-looking people with possibly two couples flaring up. And so far, no one is up to the task of playing the villain, although Patricia, Sean and Sarah are possible candidates.

> The famous reality TV show hies off to the South Pacific. The scenery is even more breathtaking, but the contestants will have to confront a grave challenge: no food and water rations

Nothing much interesting happens over at the Rotu tribe, although tension ensues between Kathy and John. The thing about Kathy is that she can turn into your own mother, barking and ordering things around. Call it obsessive-compulsive, but she says she only wants to get important things, like building fire, done and over with as soon as possible. When her other tribemates decide to rest after failing to build a fire, Kathy snaps and says they have only been trying for two hours. John snaps back and they have an argument, which prompts Kathy to leave the group for a while. John takes this opportunity, and builds a fire this time. When Kathy gets back and sees this, they patch things up. To predict the outcome of the show later on, Kathy goes, John stays.

Chic

Meanwhile, it's Tammy that I'm really rooting for. As a crime reporter, she does look like one tough chick. Although she isn't that visible during the first episode, she seems nice during her few moments. Neleh, on the other hand, looks like Britney Spears on the "Survivor" official website. However, she looks rather scary on TV, especially her teeth. Robert, who does seem scary with his big build, tattoos and voodoo doll, seems pretty nice to me.

It looks like the women will be calling the shots in this tribe though. Aside from Kathy and Tammy, they have Zoe who looks like she has had too many beers in her life. Gabriel is sweet-looking, a cross between Frodo and Ethan of "Survivor 3," while Paschal is old. Speaking of Paschal, he could suffer the same fate of "Survivor 3's" Carl, who's a dentist. He might be too rich for "Survivor." And although Rotu won the first immunity challenge, with their lack of an alpha male, they may start losing, especially if the challenges involve physical strength. Not that I'm chauvinistic, but you do need muscles to carry a 300-pound canoe.

So who among these wackos get to take home the million dollars? At least, we know now that it's not going to be Peter.

E-mail the author at jason_2bu@yahoo.com

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Activities lined up include a welcome-to-Boracay dinner, "Famous" style, on the first night. Called "White Out and Out-SMARTed," the party requests all guests to come in white and party all night to the musical selections of DJ Manolet Dario.

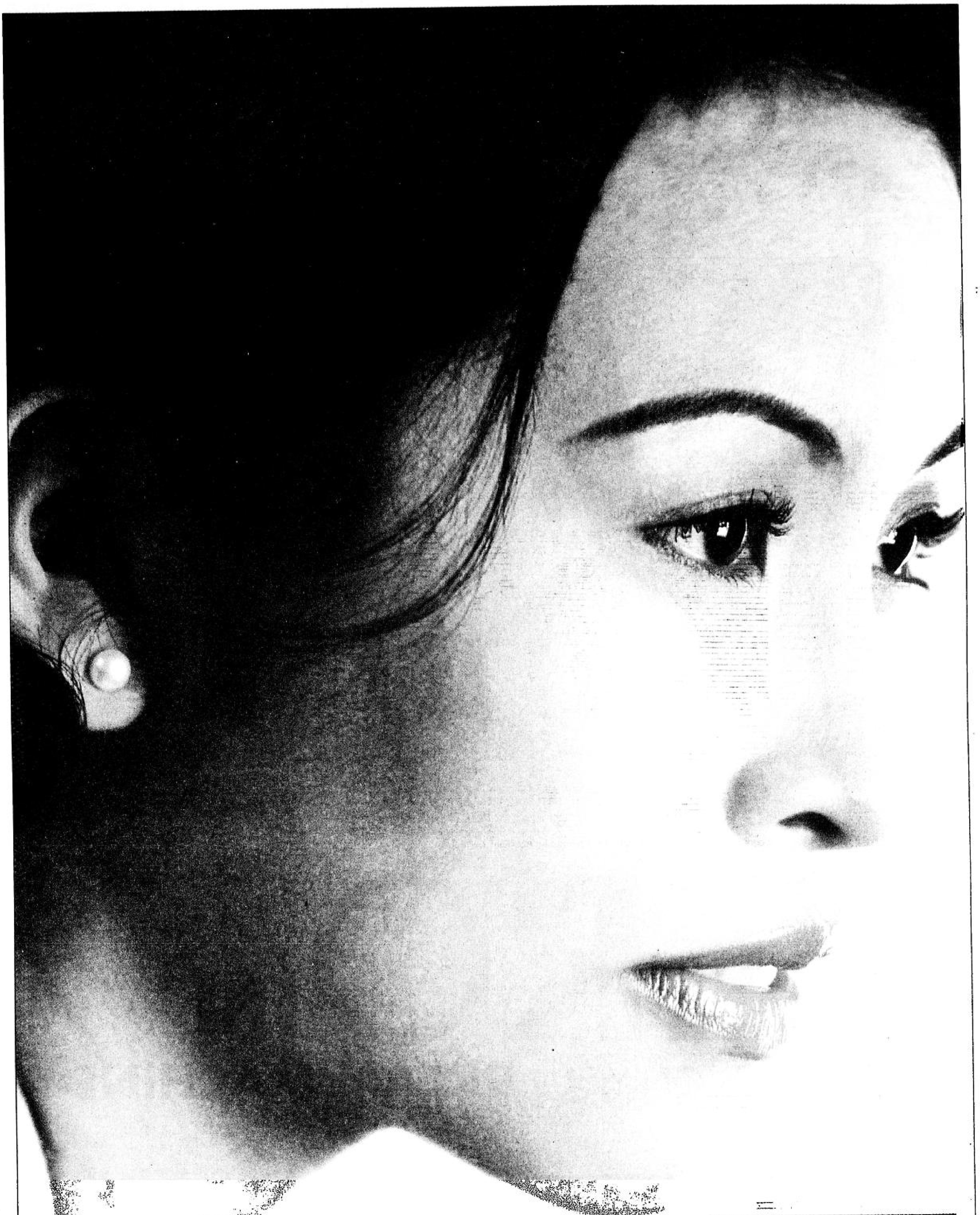
Saturday will be a full day under the sun at the Smart Beach Ball Bash. First up is the Suunto Asia Cup, a hobie cat challenge with the participation of international racers. It will be followed by the Time Depot Jet Ski Race. The Boracay Celebrity Beach Volleyball Tournament will be after lunch with celebrity players going two-on-two. Fun, wacky times are up ahead with the zed Amazing Relay Race.

Finally, at sunset, the Davidoff Cool Water Boracay's Best Bodies 2002 competition goes underway. Guests will be asked to come in their most colorful outfits for the "Color Me Famous, Color Me Smart" party. Winners of the day's events will receive their awards. Penshoppe will present the hottest summer fashions in its SPF Fashion Show.

SURVIVAL OF THE FITTEST. "Famous" guests having fun in the sun.

Before leaving on Sunday, guests will first take part in the Beach Clean Up Drive, which is part of the I Care! Boracay campaign. Then they will "Beach You Adieu" over lunch before flying back to Manila.

The "SMARTly Show Off Your Tan" party at Ché in Rockwell on March 13 will be an occasion to reminisce about the glory days on Boracay island.



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2bU

THE ROTU tribe's first immunity challenge

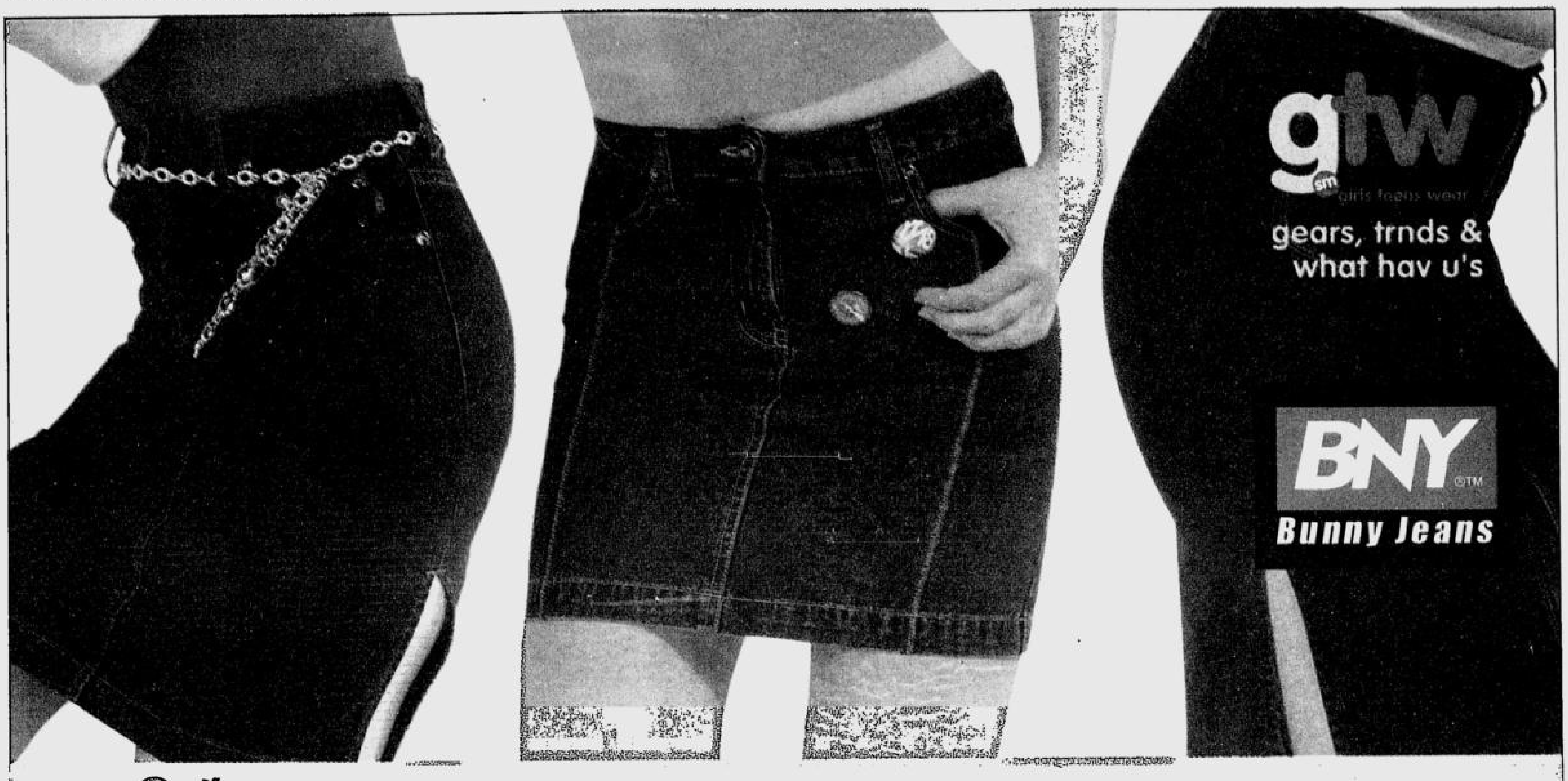
'Survivor 4'

promises to be one wacky ride

By Jason Doplito
2bU! Correspondent

IT could be the wackiest "Survivor" yet. There's one guy who says he has seen a rooster "take off like a 747," another who gives praises to the Almighty à la John the Baptist, one flirt who has her own set of built-in "flotation device," a limousine driver who brings along his voodoo doll as his luxury item, and a watermelon queen plus seed-spitting champion all in one. Judging by the first episode, it looks like "Survivor: Marquesas" will be more interesting than it's African counterpart last season. And early on in the show, not a few have made their bets and declared their favorites already.

SURVIVOR/ p.D2



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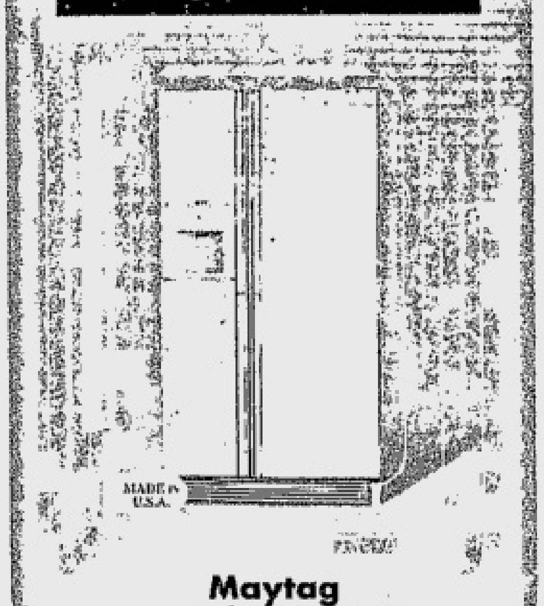

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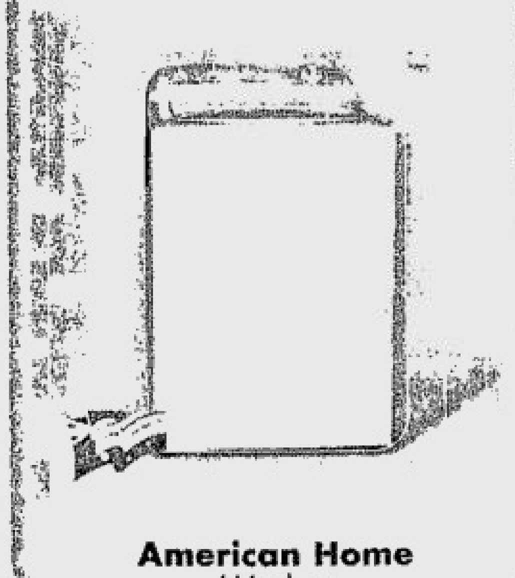

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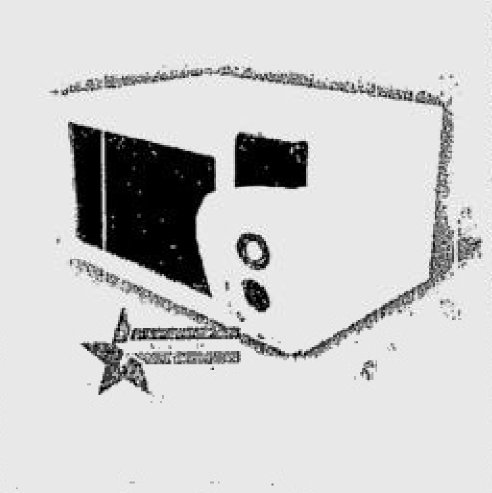

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